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I, ALONE, REMEMBER

BY LUCILE CARR MARSHALL



*Indiana Historical Society
Indianapolis, Indiana, 1956*

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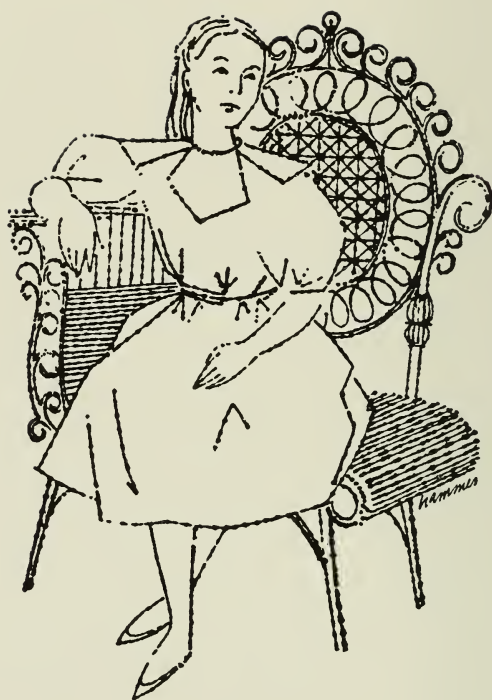
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I, ALONE, REMEMBER

BY LUCILE
CARR MARSHALL

DRAWINGS BY
JACQUELINE HAMMES

*Indiana Historical Society
Indianapolis, Indiana, 1956*

The author of this little volume, Lucile Carr Marshall, is the daughter of Elisha and Mary Jane Hess Carr, and the granddaughter of Joseph and Nancy Drummond Carr and Milton and Elizabeth Shively Hess. The farm home she describes was in Clark County, northwest of Charlestown.

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To All Descendants

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I, Alone, Remember

Leland Who Never Was

My parents named their expected son Leland. Until a few short weeks before my mother's confinement they had not known there was to be a baby. They had been married eight years: my mother was in her fortieth year and my father was forty-eight. After they recovered from their surprise it began to seem fitting and proper to them that Father should have an heir. He farmed a large tract of land which he had been accumulating piece by piece through the years. If he should have a son to inherit his holdings, life would be given new meaning.

There was, however, no lack of warmth accorded the girl baby. Father, with his tenderness toward all young things, must have loved me the moment he saw me. In later years he often said, "I never spoke a sharp word to her in her life," and he never did. A name was not selected readily, since, obviously, I could not be Leland. A relative at length brought the matter to a decision but not until I had existed six months without a name.

I lived throughout my childhood on the land my great-grandfather had purchased while Indiana was still a territory, and in the house my grandmother had built before the Civil War. Almost every object I picked up carried a story.

Except when Mother invited small cousins to stay with us because she felt their companionship would be good for me, I lived with three people, any one of whom was old enough to have been a grandparent, and with years to spare. Beside Father and Mother there was Uncle, a bachelor. He had been fifty years old when I was born. I suspect that Uncle, the even tenor of his days upset by the turning of the sitting room into a nursery, was inclined to regard me as a "nu-i-sance" in the beginning. That word, pronounced as if it had three syllables, was one with which I early became familiar. I understood it to be a term of endearment. I climbed upon Uncle's lap, or tugged at his hand as we walked, or stood in the way of his hoe, and heard him say, "You're a nu-i-sance, ain't you?"

As I grew older, I followed Uncle to the loft over the woodshed and watched him dust off the spinning wheel, the loom, the wool carder. Out in the barn lot I looked on while he tipped up the queer black object with three legs, draining out the water before giving the chickens a fresh drink. It was a "spider" he told me, and had been used on the hearth when cooking was done by an open fire. In the cellar he once pulled a rusty thing from above the whitewashed beams, and rubbed the cobwebs away. A candle mold it was, he said, and he showed me how candles were made from tallow. His face shining, he described the dazzling brightness when, long ago, dozens of candles were lighted in our hall and parlor for parties. I know now that Uncle took on new life in telling me the old stories. Until my arrival he had thought himself quite through with everything, since all that he had loved was in process of change.

I seem always to have understood a great deal about ancestors. My father and uncle had heard tales from the lips of people who remembered the pioneers, and these stories they passed on to me. My great-grandfather who built his cabin in the wilderness, George Washington whose picture, with Martha's, hung cozily in our parlor like that of a relative, Columbus who had set sail for the purpose of looking up a

place for us to live, God who beheld the waters at Creation—all these seemed to me rather close together in point of time. Against the more heroic figures were the kinsfolk, the old people, now dead, about whom Father and Uncle talked. These had all lived but to make our lives possible. This present, that they had been at such pains to establish, was quite stable, and I had little conception of future change. My childish idea of the well-planned scheme of things, though egocentric, was a most comfortable one.

With a few exceptions I loved my ancestors. Today I continue to regard them as charming people with characteristics that both amuse and elicit tenderness. Now that I am a grandmother I know, too, what descendants really are. *Ancestors, descendants*—the dry, parchmentlike flavor, associated with genealogical records has been removed from both words for me. Only *time*, a queer something we do not understand, separates the two.

Descendants are babies. Descendants are people who come into the world as individuals with whom we are not yet acquainted. Immediately they set about developing into endearing folks with cuddly, funny ways. When I have been looking into the eyes of my grandbabies, I have wished my parents might have enjoyed them too, for they would have loved them so. From that point I have gone on to bestow pity upon my ancestors. They missed so much of which they did not dream, because they could not know the babies who are arriving in the pulsing present. Nothing can be done about this, for time is a strange and unchangeable barrier.

Perhaps, though, to some extent, I can acquaint my descendants with their ancestors, introduce them, as it were. Here, too, I am fighting time, that relentless force that wipes out all memories. But, by recalling a few incidents and a few personalities, I can try to bridge the generations. I am the more impelled to the task because I am the only person in my family who can attempt it, for, I, alone, remember.

Before the Beginning

Painful shyness must have held me in firm grip whenever I stood at the door of the log washhouse. Otherwise I should not remember so clearly the small hollow in the threshold where my three-year-old foot fitted, nor the scrubbed, uneven floor that lay within the circle taken in by my downcast eyes.

It was Aunt Kitty who frightened and fascinated me. This was not because of her color, for I well knew the tenderness of other dark hands that ministered to my comfort. Aunt Kitty was small and very stooped. Her white hair stood out like bird wings above her wrinkled face. She sucked at a pipe, a fearsome thing that sent smoke curling around her eyes. Aunt Kitty seemed always to be hovering near the big stone fireplace. Sometimes she stirred one of the great black kettles that hung over the flames. Steam then rolled in columns to the rafters, and from behind it Aunt Kitty would call my name, slowly, coaxingly.

Mother said, "Always remember Aunt Kitty. She was once a slave. Someday there will be no more slaves alive."

Father said, "Remember the old washhouse. It was the log cabin where your grandfather and grandmother lived. Only—when they lived in it, it stood down in the corner of our yard where the maples are growing."

Aunt Kitty soon dropped out of my life. The purpose she served seems to have been to impress the log washhouse upon my memory. The cabin was torn down and its logs removed when I was four years old. I am certain of the time because of the custom people have, occasionally, of recalling events by the age of a child. My father and my uncle said to visitors, "The old house was torn down when she was four years old." They seemed sorry, I thought, because the house was gone. I wondered why they had not kept it since they liked it.

For a long time the ground around the place where the cabin had stood was rough with scattered stones. In front of

that space was an arbor as large as a big room in a house. It had once sheltered the doorway of the cabin, and wild grapevines grew over it. Their shade made a lovely, cool spot to play on summer days. As long as the arbor remained, and as long as people spoke of the cabin with queer sad tones in their voices, I held a picture of it fresh in my mind. I recalled it most clearly as it had stood while men were at work tearing it down. The roof was gone at that time, and the sun streamed down within its walls.

On the one side was the door where I had stood, and a window was beside it. On the opposite side was nothing at all save logs chinked with mortar. I knew the feel of the mortar because Uncle broke off a piece for me to crumble in my hands. The middle wall was taken up with the chimney and the stone fireplace, where Aunt Kitty had once crouched beside her swinging kettles. A door stood open by the side of the fireplace and has remained for me an unsolved mystery. I never passed through it as far as I can recall, for the memory of Aunt Kitty guarded it. Uncle, coaxing me to venture into the room beyond, said that his sisters had slept there. These sisters were, as I came to know, Aunt Becky and three younger girls.

On the other side of the fireplace were wooden pegs mounting the wall. The big boys, Uncle said, climbed them like a ladder to the loft and their straw ticks. I rubbed my hand over the pegs enjoying the smoothness, and wondering how bare feet could polish them so that they slipped so easily under my fingers. Uncle, who had been the littlest fellow, had slept in a trundle bed pulled from under the big bed in the room by the fireplace. Father had not been born, a bewildering bit of information my mind was slow to grasp. Nor had the two youngest sisters been born.

It was Aunt Becky who oversaw the moving into a new house and, immediately thereafter, the birth of a new baby—Father. She baked a cake in honor of the doubly important event. To do so she had to climb into the loft of the cabin

to get a panful of fine white flour that had been left here. Father was the one who liked to tell this part of the story to me. He did it so vividly that it was hard to understand that he had not himself seen Aunt Becky scrambling up those pegs to the loft. It seemed strange, too, that he had not tasted the cake, since he seemed so pleased that it had been baked.

After the tale was finished, he and I never failed to look around the downstairs bedroom of our own house. Father would say with the greatest satisfaction, "Here I was born, and here you were born, too."

Three dates were drilled into my memory, as of equal importance. Columbus discovered America in 1492, the house was first built in 1838, rebuilt in 1856.

People who came to visit us often asked, "Why does the house turn its back to the road?" The question was apt to pop up when we were all sitting pleasantly in the yard, and I resented it. It seemed to imply that the house was eccentric. Queerness was a thing I was being taught zealously by Mother to avoid.

Father gave an explanation which seemed to interest and almost please the guests. The house as originally built had faced a set of roads now not often used. Directly in front was a road from Springville leading somewhere to the north. No longer was there a Springville, Father said, but only a few log houses standing empty. Springville had been one of the first towns in Indiana, a trading post for the Indians. Down below our barn was a smooth hollow on a rock ledge where a spring had once flowed. Indians, coming on the old road from Springville with firewater that they had accepted for their furs, stopped at the spring. They poured a little of the whiskey into the basinlike hollow to mix with cold water. They stooped to drink; then, singing lustily, they followed the road into the woods to the north. I bent over once and rubbed my lips along the smooth stone that redskin lips had touched. My sunbonnet dipped suddenly and its shadow frightened me. Was a feather-headdressed warrior kneeling beside me?

Other roads led off in a generally western direction. On these Father had ridden by wagon or on horseback to attend church in the Silver Creek Meetinghouse, or trudged afoot to his log schoolhouse. The "singin' school," renowned for many years, had been disbanded by the time he was old enough to attend, but for his older brothers it had been the social spot of the community and on countless evenings they had set out for it on their horses as soon as dusk began to fall.

Toward these roads the first house had looked from its high windows, and its front door opened hospitably upon them. That first house had consisted of two main rooms, large and high ceilinged, as if it had been expected to form part of a larger house some day. Upstairs, under the roof that sloped toward the back, were two sleeping rooms, also large. A lean-to formed the kitchen, and from the kitchen a path ran down the hill to the springhouse.

By the time my grandmother, Nancy Carr, rebuilt her home, community activity had shifted. A little town named Charlestown, not too well thought of at first, had become the trading and social center of the county. When Grandmother Nancy rebuilt her home, she followed the pattern indicated by the first house, but her lane led out to the southeast to join the road for Charlestown. That springhouse that had been conveniently down the hill from the kitchen door was now beside the lane on which guests arrived. Hence people said the house had its back turned.

I thought the arrangement perfect. When we had been to town, we drove homeward through maple trees along our creek. At a certain turn in the roadway we saw the house on its hill sheltered by its cedar trees. There were no disfiguring outbuildings to indicate the rear. Instead there was the so-called "lower lot" running down the hillside, where lilacs and japonicas grew. A mossy stone wall enclosed the lot, and below the wall as we approached was the creek with a picturesque banistered bridge. To the side was a pretty entrance to a little cave covered by hanging vines and tucked cozily among

rocky ledges. This had been the site of that springhouse where Grandmother Nancy had kept the milk and butter. Best of all, as we drew nearer we sometimes glimpsed Mammy Jennie watching for us beside the kitchen door, then hurrying inside to finish supper.

Visitors, even while convicting the house of rudeness in turning its back, admired its beauty. Once in awhile some learned guest commented upon the Greek influence that could be seen in country homes. It was in the corners that ran up like Doric columns to meet the roof, and in the porticoes, one to the north and one to the west, with their matching columns and capitals. I did not know about the Greeks. Neither, I think, did Father and Mother, to any great extent. But we all instinctively felt the rightness of the substantial home standing so firmly upon its hill. If there was austerity in the white walls, it was softened by the farmhouse effect of dark green shutters.

It was the carpenters whom Grandmother Nancy hired to rebuild her house that were responsible for its classic lines and all its other good points. The roof was lifted, I often heard Father explain, to make the big bedrooms upstairs with their generously high ceilings. The parlor wing was added, as well as the kitchen and the large summer kitchen with its cool cellarway. The two chief carpenters boarded with the family all one winter while working in a shop over the woodshed to prepare parts for the stairway. They bent over plans they themselves had drawn, cutting railings and steps according to their own measurements. The finest of walnut had been provided months, perhaps years, before. Nancy's sons, walking through the woods, had marked the handsomest trees, had them felled and seasoned.

When spring came, the stairs were set into position against the curving walls of the hallway. "And they fitted to the fraction of an inch!" said Father, the wonder of it still in his voice.

The community was invited to a housewarming. Candles were inserted in holders half way up the length of the stairs to throw their gleam over the rounded wall and up to the second floor ceiling. As was proper, the two carpenters stayed on to be guests of honor at the celebration.

By the time I knew the stairway the walls of the hall had been papered in lustrous bronze and gold. Halfway up the stairs a door, which opened upon the back stairs, was draped luxuriously in rich velour of blending shade. Dark red Brussels carpet glowed with the small gold figures woven into it. Brass rods gleamed on the steps, and the polished railing shone. Blue glass at the sides of the hall door and in the transom above it threw a weird light over all. It touched the bronze, the gold, and the red and turned them into what I thought an almost unearthly beauty. That blue light seemed the magic of the house my Grandmother Nancy had built.

Nancy had been a widow, as I was often told, for twelve years before she grew prosperous enough to transform her house into its present beauty. With the aid of her older sons she managed the land, and with the trusted Aunt Becky she governed the household. She was a little thing, five feet three, but many are the stories of her ability and practicality. She must have been proud of her house, the result of her good management, but there is little evidence that she relaxed to enjoy its beauty. She was much too busy with farming, with carding and weaving, with nursing the sick throughout the whole community, and controlling the lives of her sons and daughters.

One story of a sentimental nature comes down from the past concerning her, and this, so far as I have ever heard, is the only one. In reality, one can read sentiment into it merely by a single phrase. At nineteen Nancy walked with her affianced husband, Joseph, over the wooded acres his father owned. The object of the walk was to choose a spot to build their cabin and begin their married life. They must have a spring, they must have a sunny slope for a barn lot, they must

have a hillside in order that the barn have a cellar to keep the stock warm in winter. If, while considering the needs of their hogs and cows, the couple perceived the beauty in the vista of trees, it must have been coincidental.

Yet the story always began with the words, "It was a lovely Sunday morning." The tale was told me many times by my aunts, by Father and Uncle. Never did it start any other way than "It was a lovely Sunday morning." To have emphasized the beauty of the morning so strongly Nancy must have told the story to her children many times in exactly those words. A *lovely Sunday morning*, that is all we have to show of a maiden's wistful sentiment.

Three generations later my five-year-old son built a playhouse in the corner of his grandfather's yard, under the maples. I said to him, "This is the spot where your ancestors built their log cabin. See? This tiny roughness under my foot shows where the foundation was."

Just as my father had once said to me, "Always remember the washhouse," so I said to my son, "Always remember this spot. Remember you built a playhouse on the very spot where your great-grandparents built their cabin."

My little boy lifted an earnest, sweaty face, willing, but perplexed. I hoped to make him see. "It was a lovely Sunday morning," I started wheedlingly. The words carried no meaning for him. Thus does the past, with each oncoming generation, draw toward oblivion.

Black Silk and Rose Leaves

My aunts, Father's sisters, were the custodians of That Which Used to Be, with all the devotion of priestesses before an altar. Each lived in a home of her own but came often to the house of her girlhood, exuding sentiment and criticism. All wore black silk, full of skirt and molded to the form as to bodice. An abundance of white ruffled petticoat peeped occasionally from under shimmering folds, the quickness of its disappearance emphasizing modesty. Snow white ruffling,

when undulating with body movements, gave out fragrance of rose leaves dried with spices.

All the sisters possessed the recipe for preserving spiced rose leaves. They kept the potpourri in treasured rose jars and took out handfuls of the ripened leaves to scatter in dresser drawers among chemises and petticoats. Graciously they had offered to teach my mother the magic of adding spices from fabled lands to the common sweetness of garden roses. It was a gesture intended to show she was received within the family circle. Humble and pleased, she gathered rose petals year after year, but they rotted foully in the bottom of the jar. In some manner, not put into words, this failure seemed to prove to Mother and her sisters-in-law that she was not in favor with the lares of the household.

Every detail of the appearance and dress of my aunts is photographed upon my memory. Aunt Mag wore a gold watch chain festooned in generous loops from neckline to waist of her black bodice. A massive brooch grasped her stiff collar firmly. In her hair, at the top of the coil, rose a tortoise shell comb with mottled balls, suggesting marbles, across its rim. Aunt Hannah, who was thin, wore a slender gold chain and a brooch that was slimmer than Aunt Mag's. Her tortoise comb was tall and lean, its sides pinched together in lines that were in keeping with those of her pale face. Aunt Becky, the only one of the aunts who ever put her arms around me as if she loved me, wore no chain and no brooch. At her throat reposed a bit of lace-edged organdy, an immaculate bit of whiteness that proclaimed her a gentlewoman. Aunt Linnie had become a name of revered memory in my childhood, but her two maiden daughters were of the same black-silk edition as the aunts. They carried black reticules which, when opened, discharged tissue paper parcels containing delicious cake, often several kinds, each better than the last.

When the aunts came to visit, they inspected the house. They flung open the presses, and stood with black-silk arms holding wide the doors. Perhaps they had a right to see how

Mother was caring for the quilts and coverlets that lay stored on the shelves. They themselves had pieced the quilts, spun the wool for the coverlets, painstakingly knotted the candlewick spreads. These bed coverings which had been left in the house were portions of inheritance set aside for my father and my bachelor uncle when that beehive of industry, once my grandmother's home, had come to an end.

My aunts padded on soft little feet into the parlor. Here they touched with reverent pride the leather-bound Bible that lay on the mahogany table. In it were recorded the dates of all births, marriages, and deaths. It would never have done for the Bible to have been moved from its consecrated spot when the sisters came. Above the Bible there hung on the wall a hair wreath, as if it, too, were a part of the family altar. The wreath was incased in a heavy concave frame and covered with glass. Roses and spirals, remotely resembling vines, had been fashioned from locks of hair, brown, chestnut, and golden. My aunts slowly rubbed their fingers across the glass pointing out the hair of their mother, the little sister who had died in childhood, the brother who had studied medicine and passed away at the beginning of what might have been a great career, all these and many others.

Even to the cellar my aunts penetrated. The cellar was small, cool, and it smelled sweet with the pure scent of lime on its whitewashed walls. Down the stone steps my aunts tripped, holding up their skirts daintily. They stood before the long swinging shelves where the rows of fruit my mother had canned were stored. These were not heirlooms most certainly, yet my aunts inspected them like judges. They estimated the number and they commented upon the color, favorably usually and with a show of politeness. It was obvious they were not sure that the little schoolteacher, who was my mother, could be trusted to provide well for the appetites of Brother Elisha and Brother David.

The visits of the sisters were unheralded. On Sundays in springtime, after the corn was in, or on any day of the week

in August or September when farm work was not pressing, they could be expected. I remember Father turning back at the edge of town one Sunday morning to drive home behind the phaeton of Aunt Mag and Uncle Nick. Mother on the buggy seat beside him bent over my head as I sat tucked in between them and made little sounds of disappointment intended only for Father's ears. Her lips had been set with a smile of welcome and she had greeted her arriving guests with forced pleasantness. She always looked forward to church after a long winter when roads were too muddy for more than occasional attendance. She had dressed me like a doll that morning, loosed my hair from its braids and brushed it tenderly. I now felt her tweak it sharply in her vexation.

"If we'd only got around the corner," said Father. "They could have gone out and visited with Dave till we got home."

"The chickens are dressed and ready," said Mother. "In a crock of cold water. I sort of knew they wouldn't miss a pretty day like this."

It was good to know, as we drove homeward, that the chickens were ready. Peacock feathers swayed over the top of Aunt Mag's phaeton like the plumes of a returning victor, and we followed like captives in their wake. Peacock feathers were as much a part of Aunt Mag's visits as calling cards for other people. Once a year she brought them to leave with us, just as she gave them to others of her favored friends. The act of presentation held a tinge of royal ceremony, and well it might. The peafowls, roaming her hills, had given her a sense of grandeur because of the magnificence of their coloring and their proud bearing. Aunt Mag loved grandeur and aspired mightily toward it.

Mother never failed to accept the gift with gracious dignity. She placed the sheaf in a corner of the dining room, spreading out the tips so all the purple eyes would show. There it stood, an ornamentation to the room, unless one of the aunts came to dine. In that case it reverted to the use Aunt Mag intended. The daughter of our cook, a graceful

girl, was stationed by the table and with the feathers she shooed away any lurking fly. My aunts chatted complacently to the rhythm of the swaying feathers. They had never heard, nor I suppose had we, that dangerous germs might lie in dust particles and fall to the dishes.

There were times when the unexpected sound of a carriage winding up our hill gave warning of visitors. We scrambled to make ourselves presentable. I helped Mother round up the library books and tuck them under her shirtwaists in the bureau drawer, a fairly safe hiding place. My aunts could say "library books," with a world of scorn in their tones. With the putting away of the books both Mother and I assumed roles that were unnatural to us. I tried to snap out of dreaming and become a child who might be described as "right peart." A peart person was one who knew what her father was doing with the farm work, how the garden was progressing, and how many chickens had hatched. A peart girl was one who sprang up to help pass the refreshments, or ran out to the well for fresh water. A peart girl wore a clean apron and had her hair brushed back smoothly. It was a strain to be a peart girl.

The Well

The well, its whitewashed well box standing in the shade of a locust tree in the side yard, was the very fountainhead of the home. Long before I was old enough actually to understand the importance of a sure water supply for a household, I sensed that the well was extremely important. I understood it from the mood of the people who gathered there. The well cast its kindly spell upon even my black-silk aunts who grew disarmingly genial when chatting beside it. They teased my little dog in a friendly way, and laughed with pleasant bursts of gaiety. Poised in their soft-soled shoes upon the grass, they whirled their voluminous skirts a decorous bit as if upon the point of dancing. Perhaps they half felt they were girls again living in the old home.

Other guests, too, lost their visiting stiffness at the well. When callers sat in the parlor, I waited in expectancy for that moment when Father would suggest that we walk out into the yard. Perhaps he had some horses he wanted to put through their paces in the barn lot for the visitors' entertainment. Whatever the excuse it was to the well that we went first. It was not that the people were thirsty, for Mammy Jennie, her manners as impeccable as her white apron was spotless, had served cold water or lemonade from the pink hobnail pitcher. This was a proper ceremony, the ladies sipping daintily while holding the pink, knobby glasses with well-arched fingers. They had politely poured whatever drops remained into a matching bowl that sat, along with the pitcher, on the brass tray. Fans had swayed, conversation had ebbed and flowed elegantly. Then at Father's suggestion, everyone sighed softly and laid down the fans.

With leisurely steps, for it would be unmannerly to rush, we passed into the hall with its blue light and through the front door. It was a long walk across the front of the house, around the corner, and along the side. Guests strolled, stopping to look at Mother's circular flower beds with the red geraniums, or off to the views of the Knobs. Those purple hills were glimpsed in the distance through openings in the encircling woods. Courteous exclamations of admiration made the walk seem a tour of great moment. I glowed with pride, seeing my home as others saw it. The only fields to be seen were our own, and the only houses those of our tenants. Two of these were once stately old homes that Father had acquired when he added pieces of land to his original farm. One was a red cottage, surrounded by cedars, from which Mammy Jennie emerged every morning to follow a winding path, downhill and up again, as she came to cook for us. No public road was visible, although if one watched closely beyond the meadows one could occasionally catch sight of a buggy top bobbing along below the vine-covered fence that marked the course of the highway. Our own graveled lane led through

a grove of maple trees to the Big Gate, so called, which we could not see from the house. That lane, a caller once said, was the only indication that we felt any need of contact with the outside world.

The side yard, where the well was situated, was so cozy and shut in that it was almost like an outdoors sitting room. The giant locust spread its far-reaching branches to make a roof, an airy one where the blue sky could be seen through the spaces left open by the leaflets. The grass carpet was greener than in any other spot because of the water that was emptied every time the bucket was refilled. Snowball bushes, japonica, and syringa encircled the place. On one side was the picket fence of the garden with lilies and hollyhocks rising above it. A great clump of lilacs grew just back of the well, and tucked between the bushes and the well box sat the grindstone to which field hands came to sharpen their sickles. A dusty path led from the well to a gate into the barn lot.

Of all the persons, young and old, who met at the well, it was the children who liked it best. City cousins, coming for a stay at the farm, drifted quite naturally to the well for a drink before starting explorations. Usually they had peeled off their shoes and stockings, for freedom from shoes was part of coming to the country. Often I had not been permitted to go barefoot until my cousins came and the long summer of play was ready to begin. With shy efforts of conversation, for a winter lay between us and our last period of companionship with each other, we dug our toes into the cool pools of water in the grass. We warmed them on the sun-baked stones that bordered the well box, and snuggled them comfortably into the soft dust of the path. Then, feeling a happy oneness each with the other, we started off for barn or orchard or creek.

At some time or other the well box was sure to suggest a playhouse to every child. The idea was all the more intriguing because it simply could not be carried out. We were warned never to climb into the box, and once the lid had been lifted

to let us see into the gaping hole we needed no further admonishment. Yet the roof, gray and moss grown, seemed to us the roof of the cottage of our dreams, so homey it was. A



foot or more above our heads in front, it sloped toward the back to be within easy reach of our hands. The whitewashed walls made a complete enclosure of the sort that suggests setting up housekeeping with play furniture. The walls were solid to the roof except in front and a part of one side where they went but halfway up. It was from the front that one leaned over to reach the bucket.

A grown person was needed to turn the crank on the side of the box. The big wooden roller then unwound the clanking chain, groaning with the effort and causing the whole box

to shudder. The bucket began a slow descent into the darkness of the chasm. We listened to the sounds it made striking against the wall, farther and farther down. We heard the bucket plunk against the surface of the water a frightening distance away. We leaned over, our fingers tight on the edge of the well box, and shouted to the echoes that came weirdly up from the depths. We crept away then, awed by the strange forces we seemed to have stirred down in the blackness.

Sometimes Father described to us how he had once gone down into the well to clean it. There had been a drought so unusual that the water became so low that it was practical to draw all of it from the well. Father climbed down into the dark hole by means of ladders that had been spliced together. He carried a torch, and at the bottom he had been able to look around a room big enough to walk around in and high enough for him to stand upright. A very long time ago, not even Father remembered when, this chamber had been blasted out of the solid rock by dynamite. There were crevices between the rock strata, and Father placed his hand in them to feel the water trickling out. The moisture was only this trickle now, but ordinarily, he knew, clear, cold water flowed from the crevices to fill the well like a reservoir. That drought had been so unprecedented that it was not at all likely ever to happen again, Father said.

I understood fairly well about streams that ran underground in our limestone country. All over the farm there were sink holes, and if they were not kept well filled with brush, cows were apt to get into them. There were caves on hillsides, some so small that only rabbits could hide in them. Other caves, not far away, were so large that boys explored them, and signs had been found that Indians had used the dark passages. In many of them mysterious streams flowed in the eternal blackness.

Standing beside our well I thought of the strange network of channels lying beneath our green grass. Those echoes we

had called into being seemed to come from some mighty force deep in the bowels of the earth. In some way it gave me the same feeling I had when I heard read the first chapter of Genesis, when darkness lay on the face of the deep and the earth was without form and void. Creation with its mighty ugliness and its shocking grandeur became too vivid to contemplate.

It was good at such times to lift my face and look about the sunshiny and familiar world. The sky through the branches of the locust tree was reassuringly blue, and the feathery clouds dipped toward me as if to caress. Uncle was sure to be in his garden on the other side of the picket fence, and would come quickly if he thought someone needed a fresh drink. He seemed always to know when I was lonely or frightened. Hollyhocks stood firm and serene beside the grape arbor. Lilies swayed in the breeze, and bees hummed with a pleasant sameness. All was stable and sure. It was as if everything that had gone before was meant for this moment.

Bit by bit, and without knowing I did so, I built up the philosophy of my childhood. Those streams had been planted in the rock for but one purpose. They were there in order that Nancy, my grandmother, might dig her well. It was all a part of that conception that my storied ancestors had lived only that I might live. There was no conscious selfishness in my naive philosophy. It gave to my life a completely satisfying feeling of sureness and stability.

Stove Personalities

When I remember the stoves in my childhood home, I think of them as distinct and differing personalities. No doubt the tendency all children have of endowing objects with imaginary life was intensified in my case because I was so much alone. When I went into an upstairs room, away from the sounds of daily living, the only sounds to be heard were the sobs of the evergreen branches that the wind stirred. Then, if a fire was burning in a stove, its crackling and cheery popping seemed companionable. The stove became like a living comrade while

I was making my little forays of adventure into the far corners, the closets and bookcases.

The stove in the spare room was a lady. She was at all times well groomed, someone having diligently polished her scroll work and iron roses. She stood with slender legs and dainty feet upon a platform covered with oilcloth. Sliding doors, ornate with decorations, could be pushed back to reveal sparkling flames. The ladylike stove was not required to do heavy work in the way of heating. The type of guests who would ascend to the spare room in the wing above the parlor did not arrive when roads were miry and weather dreary. Only summer visitors who brought much gay laughter slept in the spare room. If the little stove was needed, it would be on chilly nights in spring or fall for those guests who came early or stayed late. She then offered hospitality in a refined and pleasing way. Her manners were in keeping with the linen towels fastidiously arrayed on the arms of the washstand beside the graceful pitcher. They held something of the gentility of the mirror encircled by carved walnut roses, hanging above the dresser. Winter visitors knew nothing of all this, for they were put to sleep in warmer rooms near the better-heated parts of the house.

The stove across the hall from the spare room was an imp. Usually this room was warmed when relatives from Father's side came visiting, and possibly the stove caught some of Mother's mood. A fluttering excitement was apt to come over Mother while she prepared the bed with soft, homespun blankets, linen sheets, and the artistic quilts which were kept in the press of this room. She walked too fast as she came up the stairs with fresh water for the pitcher, and she fumbled the fine towels with fringe on their ends. Her eyes were shiny in that way they had when she was driven to some retort to one of Aunt Mag's criticisms. Yet when she spoke to me, watching her, her words showed only punctilious courtesy toward the coming guests, and I knew I was shut out of her real thoughts. I turned to the stove and it winked at me. It

knew something was afoot, and it twinkled discreetly and glowed knowingly with mischief. Occasionally, coming upon an explosive knot in its dry wood, it laughed outright.

Sometimes Mother set me to watch it while she busied herself with company preparations in another part of the house. If the stove spat out an ember upon the carpet, I was to call her. It had several openings, front doors that could be slid back to form a sort of open fireplace and an end door that received the wood, as well as various dampers. Mischievously it bided its time, and under cover of innocent crackling it shot its sparks from one or another of its openings. I watched diligently. If only a tiny spark glowed on the ingrain carpet, I was permitted to place my foot boldly upon it. If a great coal struck thuddingly on the floor, blackening the carpet and setting up the smell of scorching wool, I must lose no time in summoning Mother. Entrusted with this solemn obligation I sat before the stove, and while I sat I pondered many things.

Above the mantel stood a vase of the colorful twists of paper that were called spills. Aunt Hannah made them with regularity and presented them to Mother. With polite deference to Aunt Hannah they were kept for a while on the sitting room mantel, but they were not used. Everyone in our family, even Uncle, appreciated the convenience of matches. We knew, however, that all my paternal aunts felt it was wasteful to strike a Lucifer match every time a fire was lighted. To be sure matches had been much more expensive when they formed this judgment which they had not seen fit to alter. A thrifty person, according to their precept, carried a flame from stove to lamp, or from lamp to stove, by means of a spill.

After a decent length of time Mother brought the spills from the sitting room mantel to this room. Though she had not used them, she did appreciate them because she thought them ornamental and quaint. If one of my aunts was expected, she tossed some of them into the fire. The few that remained gave the impression that spills were being used with fitting

frugality in our household. Thereupon, Aunt Hannah, pleased, brought us some more, and for the purpose carefully hoarded all the bright-colored pieces of paper which came her way.

This was the type of thing that the impish stove apparently knew all about. Its gay flames caught the pink, blue, yellow, and green spirals of paper and made a second's work of destroying them. A partner in deceit, it responded to Mother's mood, but it blinked its dampers and kept me out of further secrets.

The stove in Uncle's room, adjoining, had a kindlier and a happier point of view. I thought of it as a sort of toy. It was precisely like the stove in the sitting room below, only much smaller, and miniature things are toys. Toys are cheerful, hence the stove seemed cheerful. When Uncle and I were in the room, it buzzed with energy, or chatted along with us. Uncle would be busy at some task, cleaning his gun for squirrel hunting, sharpening spiles for drawing sap from sugar trees, melting lead in the fire to mold bullets. I asked questions, and Uncle, his face alight with smiles, answered them. The toylike stove made three of us, chattering while we talked.

There was much in Uncle's room to make me curious, for it was like a museum of old things. In fact, I was to learn that Mother slipped more and more pictures and family keepsakes into Uncle's room at every housecleaning time. Quite tactfully she removed a few objects from other parts of the house and placed them here. If any of the aunts questioned their whereabouts, she replied, "I thought Dave would enjoy having them."

The rag carpet, made from rags Mother and Mammy Jennie had cut during leisure hours and woven by an old lady in Charlestown, gave an air of old-fashioned living, altogether in keeping. A tall chest in one corner was loaded with old leather-bound books which were never read except when I hunted through them in search of something that might pass as a story. Portraits of Kentucky cousins in Confederate uniform and a Union officer or two looked down from the

walls, among them the Northern general, Jefferson Davis. Bearded preachers, usually with the upper lip shaven in a manner which became associated with sanctimoniousness in my mind as I grew older, looked gravely at me.

In one corner was a very tall bed with a white candlewick counterpane sweeping to the floor like a monstrous tent. This was not Uncle's bed, but was kept ready for overflow guests, often being occupied by some nephew of Uncle. Uncle's own bed, a cozy three-quarter one, stood in the corner near the door as we came in. Nearly always it had a dent in the bolster where his head rested every night. I loved his little bed for it seemed so much a part of him. When I visited the room, I passed by it to a spot beside his closet door, and between the stove and a window. The closet held many things Uncle took out to show me—powder horns, old rifles, a warming pan, a big dipper used in maple-sugar making. The window looked off past the barn to the hilltop where Uncle's grandparents had made their homestead. It was a spot where stories came easily. The little stove seemed to listen, too, a young thing, like me, against a background of the very old.

The parlor stove was a boor. Only after a protesting struggle did he accept company. Because swifts had often clogged his chimney with nests, he had an excuse for belching smoke into the room. He seemed to exult in the unpleasant odor of polish that he sent off from his round sides in hot waves. The family, to a degree, seemed to share his unpleasant mood in that first rush of preparing for company. Mammy Jennie had a scowl on her face, and the pans clanked in her hands. Mother dashed down the cellar steps to hunt her best preserves. Uncle scurried to the smokehouse for ham or sausage, and I dared not step in his way. I had my own difficulties, for the tangles had to be jerked from my hair by Mother's hand grown suddenly rough.

An hour or so later Mammy Jennie would be smiling proudly as her buttermilk biscuits rose in the oven. I could slip into the parlor where that smell of polish now mingled

quite agreeably with odors of sage dressing coming from the kitchen. This became for me the company smell, exciting and enjoyable. The stove, having burned out all those nests in the chimney, settled down to draw as he should. He was not a pretty fellow, to be sure, tall, clumsy, and quite ostentatious with nickel trimming. He appeared awkward and out of place in that bower of lace curtains, Brussels carpet, and carved furniture. But he was behaving himself, and after the siege with the tangles in my hair, I knew what it meant to have gained self-control after a tantrum. The guests sat sedately on the brown upholstered chairs. By and by I climbed down from my own chair and procured from the mahogany table a copy of Owen Meredith's *Lucile* which had been given me after I was named. It was always certain that if I sat quietly with the book in my hands, I should, at length, receive pleasant notice. Good manners were rewarding.

Of all the stoves the one in the sitting room was most nearly a friend. It was a drum stove, but a drum stove with distinction. It had an ornate hearth and a fancy top with decorations fashioned in iron, including an imposing sort of urn that rose from the middle. Of mornings I sat beside it before I dressed and rubbed my toes upon its warm hearth while looking dreamily up to the urn, which could be made a part of all sorts of fancied adventures. The day to follow would be filled with happy studies and little games to be worked out in my imagination. In the evening while Mother was busy with supper and before Father and Uncle came to the house, I would crouch before the stove. Its dampers, closed to mere slits, would be like eyes, sleepy and tranquil. The stove would help me think out the confused ideas the day might have introduced. Something of a philosopher the old stove was, comfortable, kindly, and all knowing, an excellent companion for a child in her thoughtful moments.

At night we four of the family gathered in a circle around the sitting room stove. The hanging lamp had been pulled down from the ceiling and another lamp placed on the stand

table. Mother read aloud, I listened while Father and Uncle were inclined to doze. Outside we could hear dogs baying, their distance emphasizing the isolation of our home. Moonlight came in through the window, keeping us conscious of the heavens. Father sometimes rose to take a look at the stars, or to step to the portico to watch the clouds. At these times the stove, warm and alive, seemed the center of the universe.

Grandmother's Portrait

When my aunts, or other relatives on Father's side of the family, came visiting in winter, a fire was laid for them in the Front Room. Actually the Front Room was not the parlor but our downstairs bedroom where Mother had placed her beautiful walnut suite when she came to the house as a bride. The terms, Front Room and Back Room, were carry-overs from the days before the house had been rebuilt and when it had consisted of two main rooms. Relatives who remembered back to the time of my grandmother liked the Front Room. They preferred it to the parlor, for in it they felt at home yet sufficiently honored.

No stove was in the Front Room, but only the huge fireplace of early days. Here flames might dance in reflection upon the shining brass andirons which, Uncle said, had been my grandmother's pride. He well knew this, for as a little boy he had often scoured them and had not liked the smell of the hot vinegar and ashes he had had to use.

It was while seated with relatives in a circle before the fire that I first really discovered my grandmother. I suppose that from babyhood I had seen her picture hanging in its oval frame above the mantel. It was a pretty frame and I had run my fingers over it once when it was down for house cleaning. But as to the face in it I had never quite comprehended who she was, what she meant, nor felt the force of her personality.

I was sitting on Father's lap that day. Already I was growing too long legged to be there but he liked to have me. Even my aunts were tolerant on this point and looked rather

benignly upon their brother and his loved child. I was watching the reflections of the flames dance on the andirons, and listening to the conversation.

A distant relative, whose name I have forgotten, made a remark to my father. "Your girl looks like Aunt Nancy, doesn't she?"

Now I comprehended quickly who Aunt Nancy was. I was already familiar with that custom people had of calling mothers of large families "Aunt." This they did whether the lady was related to them or not. Women, as their families increased, became respected matrons in the community, and the title was conferred upon them like a high honor. Thus my grandmother was "Aunt Nancy."

I looked at Aunt Nancy, my grandmother, and I did not like what I saw. Aunt Nancy's shoulders were fat and stooped with a little cape laid around them. Her face was almost expressionless, yet not quite. The eyes were slanted and looked far off beyond me. They seemed about to smile but they did not. I felt that if the lips moved to speak, the words might be sharp, as often were the remarks of my aunts.

I buried my head on Father's shoulder trying to escape the scrutiny of the guests. When they began to speak of something else, I whispered to Father,

"I don't look like her, do I?"

"Indeed you do!" he said. Plainly he had been pleased by the relative's comment. "You have her eyes exactly."

Those little, cold, slanting eyes!

Father seemed to sense something was troubling me. "If your grandmother was alive today, she'd take you on her lap and hug you!" he said.

I did not want to be taken on the fat lady's lap to be close to her bosom. I slipped away from Father and out of the room. From that day on I could not rid myself of the heavy presence of the picture. I disliked going alone into the bedroom because of that face over the mantel.



Father and Uncle referred to their mother as Mammy, and I shrank from the word as they spoke it. Perhaps I had a feeling that it was not fitting for grown men to speak and act like obedient little boys. The word *Grandma* had little meaning for me except from reading pleasant stories about other children. Gradually the picture became "Aunt Nancy" to me.

Nancy still ruled our house to a large extent, I soon learned, with her rules and maxims. To be sure, some things had changed with the passage of time. For instance, we no longer made candles from tallow, plucked geese for our pillows, or bleached wool for coverlets. But Father and Uncle often spoke of such projects, and they gave the impression that Mammy was the better woman because she had carried them out. At butchering time Mammy was often quoted, and lard was rendered, pork pickled, hams smoked exactly as Mammy had prescribed. Soft soap was made in season, and wild herbs were gathered at the right time although often they were never used. When Uncle was paring apples to dry on the roof, or sifting seeds from the garden, he had a soft smile on his face. Little boylike, he was doing as Mammy had taught him, and he was at ease and content with himself.

Nancy had known so many of the secrets of medicinal herbs that people had respected her wisdom and came to her for advice. When there was illness in the community, she was in demand as a neighborhood nurse. Often, without previous warning, a man would ride up on horseback, leading behind him a horse with an empty saddle. Hurriedly, and with the help of Becky, Nancy put her dried herbs and bottles of bitter draughts into a saddlebag. Then she mounted the horse block and climbed upon the nag that had been sent for her. From this commanding position she gave last-minute instructions to Becky, that faithful oldest daughter. A row of little tow heads were lined up against the fence, listening and watching. Among them, of course, were Father and Uncle, desolate because Mammy was going away. No wonder that under such solemn circumstances they remembered every word she uttered as she dictated what was to be done, and how. How long she would stay nobody knew, but one thing was certain, she would remain as long as she was needed.

Nancy's moral teachings were adamant. Her sons were required to be under the home roof by nightfall unless they could give an acceptable reason for being away. To "run

around at night" was a low form of corruption, indulged in only by young fellows of inferior type. Not one of Nancy's sons ever smoked or drank, except when a swallow of wine was advised as medicine. Not one, as far as I have ever heard, ever uttered a word of profane language. In fact, swearing was prohibited on the premises both in Nancy's day and Father's. I recall watching with Uncle some men at work in a hay field. We stood at a little distance under the shade of a tree. A sudden silence fell on the group, and Father stepped into the midst of it gesticulating vigorously. A man left the others and walked away, shoulders stooped, over the field toward the road.

"What happened?" I asked Uncle.

"That man must have been cussin'," he said.

It was not an isolated incident, for Father had discharged other hands when he heard them swearing in barn or fields.

Nancy had her sons and daughters baptized into the Christian Church when they reached the proper age. This meant immersion in the creek below old Silver Creek Meeting-house. Only one refused, and this, strangely enough, was Uncle, the sweetest and gentlest soul of all the family. Perhaps it was shyness that kept him from the step, the same shyness that had held him from ever keeping company with a girl. My aunts were always concerned about the salvation of David's soul, but I, who spent so much time in his company, could have told them all was well with him.

The conversion of John, the sensitive scholar among the sons, was dramatic. Conviction overtook him on a cold winter night in the log church and he made the confession. Then, by the light of flares, the congregation followed him and the preacher down the hill to the creek. Here he was lowered into the water and afterward rode home on horseback in wet clothes. Mammy directed that hot pepper tea be made and a tub of almost scalding water be set out that he might soak his feet. His sisters, at her direction, placed coals in the bed-warmer to heat his feather bed. There must have been a deal

of hustling that night, but the sisters had faith that both the Lord and Mammy could be trusted that no harm result.

John was regarded as the family's most promising son and Mammy's highest achievement. He attended the "Male Academy" in Charlestown, then the University of Louisville to study medicine. Afterward he "read" with the well-known physician, Doc Dave Coombs. Still dissatisfied with his education he took the tremendously important step of going to Philadelphia for further study. This decision was arrived at only after much consideration, and the seeking of advice from all quarters. Here he contracted the pneumonia which he had escaped on the night of his baptism. Brothers Jim and Joe made the long trip to Philadelphia to bring him home to Mammy. If the journey had seemed hazardous to John, the brilliant and capable one, it must have taxed the heroism of his less gifted brothers. John died in the old home, and the very spot where his bed had stood was pointed out to me as if it were a sacred place.

There were many books about the house with John's name on the fly leaves: grammars, books on mathematics and philosophy, and books in German. I fingered the volumes, learned a little from them, and aspired some day to be as fine a scholar as John. His picture hung on the parlor wall, a handsome, clean-shaven face, and I often studied it. Perhaps a dream and an ideal came to birth to influence my life, and John, who never had a child, had a spiritual one.

Nancy, intense in her own rectitude, believed war to be wrong and those who took part in it guilty of great sin. During the years of the Civil War she went serenely to church, as always, to watch the baptizings and to sing the hymns. She said for all to hear that the North had no right to fight the South. Oh, slavery was wrong, everybody knew that, of course, but the southern people would take care of freeing the slaves if they were left alone. Were they not good folks? Did not many of the family's cousins live below the Ohio River?

Could she think of permitting her sons to go down to the South against them?

Father and Uncle were of the age to enlist, but they resisted every call for volunteers. In the community round about young men were making their choice. Some joined the army; others remained at home to become known as Southern Sympathisers. It was a time of deep emotion. For Uncle the decision was simple. He would stay behind. For Father it was more difficult, but he stayed. When I studied history in school, this disturbed me greatly. It would have been wonderful to have had a father who had been a hero.

Then word came of Morgan's Raid. Aunt Becky ran to the garden with a spade and the family silverware. She selected a spot for the interment of the spoons at the end of the row of rhubarb where she hoped to find them again. Four or five men hurried up our hill on horseback, seeking volunteers to turn Morgan back. Father quickly unhitched a horse from a wagon, leaving its teammate standing in harness while he ran upstairs for a rifle. Nancy did not interfere. This was defense of home: it was not warfare.

Father laughed as he concluded the story. After a few days he and the party came home never having seen Morgan's men who had gone to the northeast of us. Father turned loose his horse, and for some reason decided to try his gun. It was rusty and would not shoot.

"A great soldier I'd have made," he said enjoying the joke.

"But you *were* in the war—a little bit," I offered hopefully.

"No," answered Father. "Mammy said war was wrong."

In Nancy's House

It was when I found the tansy that I came nearest to having a warm human feeling for my grandmother. I discovered the tiny yellow button flowers and their fine-cut leaves in a cozy corner made by the rock wall of the "lower lot" and the white picket fence of the back yard. The evening was cool, the sort of summer evening that sharpens the senses. I was

delighted with the piercing smell the plants left on my fingers when I held them. Uncle supplied the name. "Tansy," he said. "Your grandma used to make tea out of it for sick people."

Perhaps it was partly because he said, *your grandma*, instead of the offending word, *Mammy*. Or possibly it was merely because of the cheerfulness of the tidy yellow buttons and the dainty softness of the fernlike leaves, together with the catchy name, *tansy*. In any case my grandmother for that moment became a real person to me. And afterwards when children found the tansy and asked about it I spoke with pride, "My grandma made tea out of it for sick people."

My grandmother made soap, also, and Uncle saw to it that this custom did not lapse into disuse. When the hopper was filled with clean wood ashes that had been accumulating, and when cracklings left from butchering were piled upon a table in the basement under the smokehouse, then Uncle would say it was almost time for soapmaking. Of evenings and mornings he and I would make trips out to the hopper, following a path back of the beehives. Buckets of water must be poured over the ashes, and the lye that then seeped down into a trough must be gathered into vessels. Hop vines grew over the sides and sloping roof of the ash hopper. Uncle crushed the cones for me to sniff, and told me my grandma had used them in medicine and yeast.

They were sharp smells, those that came from the hops, the ashes wet with cistern water, and the brown, poisonous lye in the trough. It is possible that the strong odors told me something about the life of my grandmother's day with its strength and purpose.

I enjoyed the excitement when Mammy Jennie came into the basement under the smokehouse to render the soap. Apparently there were no written directions but only memories of how "Mammy" had done. Uncle and Jennie wrangled good-naturedly while the mixture boiled in a great iron kettle in the brick furnace. Later the brown soft soap would be stored in vessels, and Mammy Jennie would have little tin

cans of it beside her while she washed. On wash days the tubs would be set out under the cherry trees, and she would bend over the shining washboard smearing soap generously over the soiled spots. Her strong back would stoop and rise as she rubbed. Mother stayed aloof from the entire procedure, remarking that bar soap from the grocery had its advantages.

The smokehouse in the back yard was windowless and had a snug-fitting door that must never be opened without Uncle's help. It was a stronghold of Mammy's old ways of doing. Hams hung from the rafters, and barrels and great stone jars stood around the side. When hams were to be smoked, a fire of hickory wood was laid in a kettle in the middle of the floor. Smoke curled up among the hanging hams and was held in the room because of the airtight walls and roof. Once the smokehouse had been used as an icehouse, Uncle said. Long ago ice was cut from the creeks in huge bars and stored here. Sawdust, stuffed between the weather boarding and the metal lining of the building kept out the heat of summer days. Ice had lasted throughout July and into August, and ice cream was often made. Sawdust still sifted out from the weatherboarding when I tapped it gently with my fingers.

In Nancy's day the operation of the sugar camp was a necessity. Refined white sugar from the South was a delicacy while maple sugar and maple syrup were commonplace. During the Civil War cane sugar could not be obtained at all. But now when Father went through the process of "opening the camp" every February, the event took on a gala aspect, with people driving out from town of evenings when they had been notified we should be "boiling off." With the first hint of a thaw Uncle got out the spiles to sharpen and count. If there were not enough, more dry reeds had to be split and made ready. Holes were bored with augers into the maple trees, and if the sap was flowing properly, it began trickling down the bark. The spiles were then inserted to carry the sweet water down into the crocks. I trudged after Uncle

during those days of making ready, sticking my fingers into the grooves of the tree bark to sample the cold, sweet sap. While the vessels were filling and Uncle was making his rounds to see that all was going well, I could kneel by an overflowing crock to drink from its edge, and nothing was ever so good.

Above, the bare branches were making a black network against the gray-blue sky. Birds called from the treetops and Uncle knew them all by name. He knew the little animals that scurried from sight with a rustling of dry leaves. The creek as we crossed it held a lace edging of ice extending from its banks, and clear water rippled over colored stones flashing its own tiny rainbows. If this was February, as they told me, then February must be the most beautiful month in the whole year.

Meanwhile Father was clearing out the little shed with a bark roof that was called the *camp*. It sheltered a brick furnace with three or four large iron kettles built into it. Incidentally, Father always spoke of both the building and the maple grove as the "sugar camp," and sometimes visitors had difficulty understanding why the woods could be a *camp*.

To collect the sugar water from the crocks horses were driven among the trees pulling a two-wheeled cart with barrels into which the water was poured. Sugar making lasted from ten days to two weeks depending on how the sap flowed. Father always had at hand a supply of new and shining tin cups, pint size. At boiling-down time everybody was given a cup and walked from the shed to try to find a patch of snow lingering in some shady spot. With snow in the bottom of the cups we went back to the shed where thick molasses was ladled out to us. A tablespoon or so on the snow in the cups made a delicious morsel of wax, cold on the edges and warm in the middle. The boiling down process was in three stages. While the sugar water was still fairly runny, it was molasses and was sealed up in jars. To have wax it must boil down a little longer, and for sugar it must boil longer still. The sugar

was poured into fancy molds, some big, some little, to be eaten as candy. I always had some in my lunch box to share with the other children when I went to school. It was chunks of this delectable sugar that the family had put into their coffee during the Civil War and felt a little sorry for themselves because New Orleans sugar could not be obtained.

The making of apple butter, too, was quite as Nancy had liked it. A kettle was set up in the side yard and a fire built beneath it. The cored apples were dumped in and at the right time cider, gallons of it, gradually added. (The cider had been made in a mill which was set up in the orchard and drew thousands of bees.) All sorts of spices were added near the end, and on these Nancy had permitted pleasant experimenting. Mammy Jennie, Uncle, or one of the farm helpers took turns stirring the butter with a long wooden paddle. The smell of spices, cider, and wood smoke filled the yard. I remember having been away one day and meeting the fragrance as we drove up the hill.

The contentment of Father and Uncle while the old customs were being observed helped make them dear to me. Inside the house, however, friction came and went. Mother could not try out a new recipe without putting herself under question. When she sunned the contents of the shelved presses, all coverlets and quilts must be brought back neatly folded and protected by coverings of linen sheets. She must not remove the picture of any gloomy, bearded old gentleman from the wall lest someone ask, "Where is Uncle ——?" She must care for huge stacks of leather-bound books, no longer read, and piles of the yellowing numbers of *Monitor* magazine. No large piece of furniture could be shifted from one corner to another without a family consultation.

The moving of the mahogany and cherry secretary had been a notable exception. When Mother came as a bride, she had a sum of money she had saved from her school teaching. She set her heart on buying a walnut suite, the height of style, for the downstairs bedroom. Father was eager to let her

have her way, but the secretary presented an obstacle. A long time before this Grandfather Joseph, husband of Nancy, had purchased the secretary from a well-known cabinetmaker. It was truly a grand object, massive and imposing. The front of the top drawer could be let down exposing smaller drawers and cubby holes. One could sit at it, perched on a high stool, using the quill pens of home manufacture. Grandfather Joseph, proud of his secretary, had intended going on to buy other fine furniture for his home, but he died a little later. He had placed the secretary between the windows of the Front Room. Then he had turned to the circle of watching children and said solemnly, "This secretary must never be moved from this spot."

Now, if Mother was to have her Victorian suite, the secretary would have to go. Father solved the problem by calling his men in from the fields. The secretary was carried upstairs to the room immediately above, and set between the windows as before. When the aunts came visiting, they commented, and continued to comment. And Father would say, always, "The secretary has not been moved from its spot. It is covering exactly the same spot of earth, one story up!"

In the case of the hair wreath Mother overstepped—that hair wreath that had hung over the family Bible. One time when Aunt Mag was visiting, she expressed herself wistfully on the matter of the hair wreath. "If you want it so much, take it!" said Mother, never estimating the repercussions.

Aunt Mag drove away at the end of her visit with a well-wrapped bundle between her knees and the dashboard of her phaeton.

"What's Mag got?" asked Father.

"That old hair wreath," said Mother. "It always gave me the creeps."

Father and Uncle looked like stricken little boys. The hair wreath was a memorial to all the departed members of the family, locks of whose hair had been used in making the flowers. Possibly the consternation Father and Uncle showed

was due as much to apprehension of what the other sisters would say as to their own feelings. Mother was, indeed, greatly censured, for the hair wreath in her keeping had been a sacred trust.

A few years later Aunt Mag's house burned down. The youngest sister fixed her eyes on Mother as she said accusingly, "And that's the end of the hair wreath!"

It was in Nancy's house we lived. Mother was never the mistress of it. Whenever tilts came up, it was with Mother I sympathized, for I never liked to see wrinkles of irritation come into her forehead. The feeling of revulsion that I had felt the day I first became acutely aware of Nancy's picture above the mantel never quite left me. She was the *Mammy* who seemed to make little boys of Father and Uncle, the *Aunt Nancy* who had been so perfect.

A day of vengeance came. Relatives were gathered in the yard pleasantly chatting. Someone happened to remark that Aunt Nancy's grandfather had come from Wales. Apparently this was a fact Father had not known, and, as was his custom, he turned to me, "Always remember and never forget that your great-great-grandfather came from Wales," he said.

My information about the Welsh people was slight, but I did know a nursery rhyme. I slipped boldly into the Front Room where the portrait hung. I moved a chair and climbed upon it, bringing my face close to the pictured face for a really audacious scrutiny, then I climbed down. The Brussels carpet felt cool and exhilarating to my bare feet, and I executed a dance, waving my arms and chanting in exultation,

"Taffy was a Welshman, Taffy was a thief,

Taffy came to our house and stole a round of beef—"

It was glorious while it lasted.

Larkspur in the Wheat

If there had not been two sides to Father's personality, Mother might have found her battle against tradition more bitter than it was. Father was a farmer as he had been taught,

hard working, practical, shrewd in financial matters. Deep down, Father was a poet, ardent, full of dreams. Father's hands were big and hard, for they had been growing steadily more muscular since that first furrow he had plowed when, as his older brother, Joe, had said, his tow head could barely be seen bobbing up and down behind the horse. (The ridge beside which he had guided his plow could still be seen in the pasture beyond the barn.) Father's feet were small and slender with high arches. They took him on the run, too eager ever to be slow. Sometimes he jumped upon his horse, Diamond Dick, who generally stood saddled and bridled, ready to gallop from field to field wherever men were at work. The two moved as one, nervous and high strung.

Glimpses of Father's poetic nature were sometimes opened to me. One evening, close to sundown, he had come home from town and was unhitching Old Joe from the buggy. I stepped through the yard gate to watch, wearing a little shawl along with the sunbonnet of summer, for the air was cool with coming fall. Old Joe slumped comfortably between the shafts, catching a wink of sleep while his harness was being removed. Father was moving quickly as he unsnapped the buckles, but when he saw me he paused. He glanced questioningly at the sun sinking behind the barn.

"Jump into the buggy!" Father called to me.

Old Joe was surprised out of his nap by a jerk on the reins, and seemed indignant.

"If we hurry we'll have time before the sun's down," said Father, pushing the harness back into place. He climbed in beside me and touched Old Joe's glossy sides with the whip. Down the hill we went, skimmed along the graveled road through the woods. The lever on the Big Gate responded to Father's quick touch, and the gate rolled back. In his haste Father left it open, a most unusual thing to do.

I still had no clear idea of what was happening.

"I want to show you something before the sun's set," ex-

plained Father. "If the light's gone we can't see it. It was there as I drove back from town."

I shivered a little as we drove past the slate quarry. With Father acting so queerly and the darkness of evening falling into the pits, I was frightened. But then I was always a little frightened at passing the pits. The quarry was marked by jagged, dark rocks that came suddenly to view where all along the way the banks had been soft with grass and wild flowers.

It was on the farther side of the quarry that Father slowed his horse and turned his buggy to face homeward. The urgency seemed to be over and he was his gentle self again. "We're not too late," he said. "The sun's still on it."

He spoke soothingly to Old Joe, and pointed for me with the handle of his whip. A branch of red gum extended in front of a bank of evergreens. That was all! People pass such things time and again and do not see them at all. A shaft of light from the setting sun fell upon the scarlet limb, singling it out from its surroundings. The bright leaves glowed, and the long branch curved against the cedars.

"Seems alive," said Father. Moses beside the burning bush could not have spoken more reverently.

Even as we looked the sunlight faded. The crimson leaves submitted to shadow and became one with the dullness of the evergreens. Father quirked the reins: the incident was over. Old Joe shook his fat sides and ambled homeward. Father said, "I wonder what old farmer 'cept me would drive half way back to town just to show his girl the branch of a tree!"

He seemed to feel he needed to apologize—to someone. Now that I understood I was not surprised at the occurrence, for it was like Father. He never had the trumpet vines cut from the tops of our rail fences, and goldenrod interspersed with blue ageratum bloomed undisturbed in the corners.

There was a day, too, when Father arranged for me and a cousin, who was visiting from Cincinnati, to enjoy the larkspur in the wheat.

He suggested the plan the evening before, while we all sat in the yard. That patch of larkspur and wheat was too beautiful to cut, he said. He'd have his men mow in another part of the field tomorrow if we'd like to see the flowers. By the day after tomorrow the mowers must come in, but at least the flowers would have been seen and enjoyed.

Mother co-operated. She was, I'm sure, often at her wits' end to provide entertainment for cousins from the city. She and I both well knew the look of boredom that could come ominously into childish faces. She started to talk enthusiastically of fried chicken and watermelon. She would prepare a picnic lunch and we girls might stay and play all day. It would be fine!

Next day two little girls with baskets and a jug of lemonade were driven in a buggy across the pasture. They were deposited upon a rocky ledge of a hillside with a wheat field stretching out on all sides. Larkspur, pink, blue and white bloomed everywhere and the bright heads, set jewel-like in the lustrous gold of the wheat, formed a widespread Arabian Nights sort of carpet. Busily we began arranging a playhouse on the rocky ledge. We did not look too long at the beauty and we had no words to express our feeling about it, but it sank in upon us all day long while we played. The wind dipped the heads of larkspur until the colors seemed to intermingle, then they gently separated again. Above was the blue of the sky with the white clouds that floated in it.



Across the valley stood a two-story brick house once painted white and no longer occupied. It was from the one-time garden of this home that seeds had blown to the field. We looked toward the lonesome place and the dark vacant windows. Our imaginations were stirred by the thought of the larkspur leaving the neglected spot to make a valiant stand for life upon the hillside and the valley. We were glad to have the comforting sense of company in the hum of the reaper at the far end of the field.

We were not forbidden to run through the wheat if we so desired, and a little stream, seemingly made to play in, frequently tempted us to leave our ledge and dash downhill toward it through the flowers. Father had not thought the few heads of wheat we might trample would be of great matter. In this he was no doubt very different from his farmer neighbors, but Father saw the larkspur and not the wheat alone. Farm work was a thing most men seemed to do while looking at their clumping boots. Father ran on quick feet or rode Dick with face uplifted.

Since I have grown older, I have wondered from what source Father received his wonderful gift of appreciation of beauty. It could hardly have been developed in the log schoolhouse where the boy who was shouting his lessons the loudest was thought to be studying best and the master sat at a high desk with a bundle of switches close at hand. Nor is it likely that aesthetic tastes were cultivated in the seminary in Charlestown which Father attended for one year. All he ever told me about this "male seminary" (kept, I believe, by a man named Spurgeon) was his disheartening struggle to master syntax, the uninspiring and complicated subject that was considered all important in preparation for advanced education. The boy who had won the spelling matches, who ciphered neatly and beautifully, and filled copybooks with perfect script, as old books saved from his log schoolhouse days revealed, gave up his daily horseback rides to the brick seminary, deciding that a fine education was not meant for him.

Nor is it at all likely that beauty was often pointed out at home. The tremendous amount of work that was accomplished every day could have left no time for pleasant dawdling, for just looking around at trees and sky. Furthermore, Nancy, as far as has been remembered of her, talked only of practical matters. She impressed her children with her maxims, her methods of doing work, her sense of duty.

But perhaps there were some individuals among the relatives who glanced at sunsets or morning mists, and spoke of them not always merely as they would affect the crops. It is only a fancy, I admit, but perhaps this tendency came from the Welshman in Nancy's ancestry. Attitudes of mind sometimes linger in a family, growing more faint, after the reasons for them are forgotten. The Welsh people, back in their home country, had loved poetry, music, and dancing, many forms of art. Someone may have passed on an aesthetic appreciation to that one little towhead who was particularly fitted to receive.

We know few facts about Nancy's people. Her father was James Drummond, son of another James Drummond. Beyond the vital dates, kept in Bibles, we know little of the second James except that as a youth of twelve he carried the colors one day in an early battle of the Revolution. On the strength of the official record of that one day in the life of a boy, several imposing Daughters of the American Revolution have worn insignia across their ample bosoms. James farmed in Clark County, marrying Nancy Griffith, daughter of John Griffith, who may have been the Welsh grandfather. James and Nancy raised a large family made up for the most part of practical people.

Thus it is only a fancy of mine, but a pleasant one, that an enviable Welsh inheritance skipping many others appeared in Father. When I executed my childish dance before Nancy's portrait, taunting her because her grandfather was a Welshman, I may have been disparaging the one gift received by

Father and given by him to me, which has made living worth the while.

Maple Park

The farm had two sides even as did Father who had made it what it was. The "back" of the farm was a hard-worked tract given over to the raising of crops and hogs. The front was a show place of whitewashed fences and green paddocks where thoroughbred horses gave glamour. The back was Father's inheritance, steeped in tradition, the front was the place where his adventurous spirit tried out the new.

It was in the back fields that picturesque rail fences offered safe corners for trumpet vines and Queen Anne's lace and thickets invited the birds. The pace of life was pleasantly slow on the back farm. Corn ripened with much gentle swaying of green blades, accompanied by the leisurely cawing of crows. Farm hands walked steadily over plowed fields, laboring quietly from sunrise to sunset. Great walnut trees spread their wide branches over grassy places and in the fall the spicy-smelling nuts dropped. Uncle gathered, hulled, and cured them. Then all year long, when we thought of it, we cracked them on the iron anvil that had been used back in the days when blacksmithing was done on the place, using a stone pestle. Uncle said an Indian had once shaped. Everything seemed old, very, very old.

Indian arrows were always being turned up by plowshares. Uncle carefully picked them up and brought them to me, one more evidence of life that had been lived long before our time. Rock ledges that cropped out on hillsides showed strata of the earth's crust exactly as pictured in a dusty old book on geology that I had found. Queer little rocks were fossils, ages old. Yet when butterflies drifted by and flowers swayed their graceful heads, my belief was firm that the past had existed but to blossom into this moment.

Old lanes that led to Silver Creek, the meetinghouse and the cemetery, and had once led to the log schoolhouse and the

singing school, lay across the back farm. Now they were no more than trails in the pastures with an outlet to the public road through gates that swung rustily on their hinges.



If there was a sweet reminiscent dearness about the back farm, felt by Father and Uncle and transmitted to me, there was smartness and modernity about the front. Father raised race horses, an enterprise he had embraced with eagerness. Across the valley from our house, well in view from our front windows, stood the horse barn. An oval track lay on the level space on the hill in front of the barn. Close by was the red cottage where the trainer lived. A watchtower rose above

the branches of a tree beside the track. Here, having an unobstructed view of the course, men often sat watching the horses. They were prospective buyers or else merely horsemen interested in marking the time the racers could make. They sat with gold watches pulled from their pockets. Stop watches, these were called, and as each horse passed some line, the men called off the seconds in excited voices.

Sometimes, in Uncle's company, I watched the horses being led around the "cooling path." After racing they were covered with blankets and walked slowly around a track, which, as it happened, encircled a pond. Their heads would be hooded and only their eyes and ears were to be seen. Boys led them, holding the bridles close to their mouth and talking soothingly and tenderly to them. These boys, who came from neighboring farms, loved their charges and worked chiefly for the glory of it.

Kentucky Ruler was the name of the fine animal who had sired this racing stock. Father had bought him from a stable in Kentucky where he had received his name. In various pastures and paddocks over the farm brood mares received the treatment due to queens, and handsome foals were in proper season running at their heels.

All the front of the farm, with the exception of the Sugar Camp, was divided into paddocks where colts and young horses were kept. The Sugar Camp (or maple grove) was merely a larger place for horses to gallop in freedom. Here one could hear the musical thunder of pounding feet beating a tattoo on the ground that was like the sound of drums. When a drove came in sight, it was with the excitement of scores of flying legs, rippling manes, and flowing tails.

The paddocks were enclosed with whitewashed plank fences to which it seemed someone was always giving a fresh coat, since it was Father's pride to keep them glistening. There was an effect of gaiety in the green of the grass and the white of the fences. Little colts pressed their noses between the planks and I thought the black noses were like notes of music

in lines and spaces. Fences ran up hill and down rhythmically, giving one a feeling of hearing a lilting song.

The original barn was struck by lightning while I was still a young child, and Kentucky Ruler burned together with several other horses. But for years the horse business went on with the progeny the great sire had left behind him. Kentucky Ruler stock was famous among horsemen. Young beaux of the day thought they must have a horse with Kentucky Ruler blood to drive to their dashing rubber-tired buggies. Thus set up, they could ask the prettiest girls they knew to ride with them to county fairs or other events. It was a compliment to a girl to ask her what her favorite color was, then tie a bow of ribbon of that color to the buggy whip.

It was not for racing but for the purpose of raising beautiful driving horses that Father carried on the business. The moral teachings he had learned from Nancy made him uneasy about the rightness of racing, for betting seemed always to accompany racing, and betting he knew to be wrong. Yet a horse must have a record for speed before he could be rated as providing desirable stock for buggy horses. Hence Father put his animals into races and in spite of himself grew excited about the outcome. I have sat in many a grandstand between him and Mother while we craned to see "Kentucky Ruler, Jr.," "Mary Neal," "Monsieur," or some other favorite break through to win. One hot night in a hotel room in Madison we listened through the windows to the placing of bets. The name "Kentucky Ruler, Jr." was heard continuously through the night, and Father alternately swelled with pride or suffered with shame that it should be so. Toward morning he said to Mother, "I'm going to get out of this business." Then he slept. Gradually the beautiful horses were sold, and Aberdeen Angus cattle took their place on our farm.

I fear that Father, with his great love for spirited horses, was disappointed that he could not make a horsemaster out of me. Very early he placed me on a sidesaddle (that had belonged to Aunt Becky) on Bonnie's sorrel back. I was ex-

pected to climb from the mounting block to the saddle and jolt uncomfortably around the barn lot, for Bonnie trotted roughly. Perhaps the undertaking would have been easier if he had not told me that Aunt Becky would have needed only the help of a hand under her foot to spring gracefully from the ground to the saddle, ignoring the mounting block. There seemed at the outset so much to learn about riding as a lady should that I quite despaired.

Later Father bought Joe for me, a lovely mahogany-brown horse who paced gently. He bought, too, a cross saddle for it was just becoming permissible for ladies to ride astride. Mother made me a divided skirt, and with Father on Dick beside me, we often rode to town. My greatest pleasure was to go alone over the fields. Joe carefully stepped down rocky ledges at my insistence and we discovered many nooks, fern grown and cool, that I could never have reached afoot.

Mother was a coward about horses and would drive only a gentle one, so here again Father was obliged to accept disappointment. He said he was ashamed that she should be seen out with a "plug" when there were high-spirited steeds in the pasture. Frequently he himself drove the matching blacks, flashing their silver-mounted harness, when we all went out together in the surrey and wanted to do justice to Maple Park Stock Farm.

There was quite enough of adventure on the country roads for Mother and me when we ambled along behind Bonnie or Joe. Threshing machines were the great menace to horses in those days before motor cars had been heard of. Etiquette had provided for the situation when a woman driver met a threshing machine. She stopped and some man left the lumbering and noisy machine to lead the horse by it. Mother accepted these attentions like a queen, and Sir Walter Raleigh could not have been more gallant than the men. At the end of the ride Mother drove up to the big red gate with "Maple Park Stock Farm" in proud gold letters on the arch above it. We waited. Always some children who lived in a pretty little

house on a hill just outside the gate raced down their path to throw open the gate for us. They were Mammy Jennie's grandchildren. It was a ceremonious occasion for all of us while they pulled on the lever and the gate rolled back to permit us to pass through.

Once inside, our horse who may have been poking took on life. Our buggy skimmed along the smooth road beside the winding creek and among the maples. That road was one of Father's great prides, and people who had bought fast horses often drove them back to ride up and down on the level surface, for no better-kept stretch of road was to be found anywhere in the county.

At the foot of our hill was a picturesque banistered bridge with planks that rattled cheerfully, as if in welcome. To the side was the entrance of a cave, covered with vines and ground ivy, and with ferns at either side. Mother had tried to coax blue flags to grow along the tiny stream that issued from it and I could not understand her vexation because they would not bloom there. To me it seemed quite pretty enough as it was.

We wound up the hill past the stone wall that enclosed the "lower lot," and the white picket fence of the yard. At the top was another big red gate, and here again we paused. Someone was sure to be watching for our homecoming, and once more a gate would be opened for us. To our left was the house and to the right, beyond the end of the red barn, was a view as lovely as any that artists have ever attempted to put on canvas. Between dense woods on either side the vista led to the far away Knobs. At every hour of the day the scene took on a new aspect of light and shadow. Mother never failed to sit before the magnificent picture in reverence and awe at nature's beauty. At these moments I am very sure she loved our home.

The Chart

It is a tragic moment in childhood when, having been promoted to helping with housecleaning, one puts a hand against

the back wall of a closet shelf and realizes there is nothing more undiscovered. In my old home there were so many presses, shelves, drawers, all containing objects that carried stories that I felt they could never be completely explored. One day Mother came down the back stairs with a roll of what at first seemed to be heavy paper. An old chart she called it and she seemed pleased at having found it. She called Uncle and asked him to take down an enormous map of the United States that hung in the living room and put up the chart. The map had occupied the wall space between the door to the dining room and that to the back stairs and had served well during my lesson hours. The chart was a scroll to be wound and unwound, and it showed the history of the world. One stood at the right and turned a little handle and immediately events from Creation onward began to flow. Then one rushed to the other side, turned another little handle, and the stream flowed backward. For a long time the mere mechanics of the thing held charm for me, but Mother promised, a little mysteriously, that it was going to help us with my lessons.

The sitting room was our schoolroom. Muddy roads prevented my attending school in town during the winter months. In good weather in fall and spring I did go, but as a timid and uncertain visitor. My education came from Mother. I sat at Father's desk, the same desk that held all his valuable records about horses. Here I struggled with arithmetic, spelling, and grammar, not without occasional tears, for Mother could be a stern teacher. "There's no royal road to learning" was a quotation often on her lips. Geography and reading were pleasant subjects, and history was our delight.

History was in fact saved for the happy afternoon hours and was scarcely a study at all. Mother read aloud to me about the colonies, the Revolution, and the brave and wonderful men who had shaped our country. While she read I sewed, thus combining two lessons into one. We progressed simultaneously to Dickens' *Child's History of England* and to the piecing of a nine-patch quilt. We completed the book from

good King Arthur to the few words the author had to say about Queen Victoria. Then, for four times, we went back and read it all over again. Meanwhile, two stitches forward and one back, all tiny and straight, with no "grinning" permitted, I finished all the quilt blocks. There was no compulsion. Dickens' humor and Mother's comments made the hours fly. The Seth Thomas clock on the mantel ticked slowly as if trying to hold them back. The drum stove sputtered over the sins of the rulers as if they made him angry, or crackled when we laughed. There were no other noises except the creaking of the cedar boughs outside the window. It was a time of contentment and deep appreciation.

It was the better to help me learn those kings of England that Mother introduced the chart. The history of nations was shown on it by means of colored bands that ran like ribbons along the canvas. The periods of time each king of each country had served were blocked out on the bands, with his dates and perhaps one or two important events of his reign. One could look up a certain ruler of England then turn to France to see who was on the throne there at the time. Germany was confusing since it seemed to have started from a maze of ribbons at a recent date. A strong ribbon at the top had very little printing upon it. What lettering there was contained names that were altogether strange to us. Mother called this ribbon, "Russia," pronouncing the word with a long *u*. Down at the extreme bottom of the chart was a ribbon, yellow in hue and quite pretty because there was little printing upon it to spoil the pleasant flow of color: nothing of importance had ever seemed to happen in China. Japan had received more attention from the chartmaker, as had some other nations, but Mother and I were not ready for them yet.

Quaint pictures were occasionally tucked in above the bands of each country. They were tiny and one had to stand close to study them. Old King Canute sat in his chair beside the ocean waves, King Arthur was busy turning the cakes in the cowherd's cottage, Henry VIII was lifting a huge piece

of fowl to his mouth, and Joan of Arc, seated on a horse, confidently carried a banner.

At a certain point, late in the course of history, Columbus' three ships were pictured. Then the Pilgrims could be observed, stepping circumspectly, the ladies giving due care to the handling of their skirts, upon Plymouth Rock. America was beginning. And because of the brightness and increased size of the illustrations, one knew the climax of history was approaching. Red, white, and blue took over triumphantly and gloriously.

During lesson hours Mother was pretty much in control of the chart, using it for my instruction as she saw fit. In the evening things got a bit out of her hands. I turned back to the very beginning where Adam and Eve were in the garden. I found the long period of Methuselah. I puzzled over Noah's ark, wondering why, since all had been so simple up to this point, the ribbons that marked the races of men as his sons had founded them, should so soon become confused and even lost. I lingered fascinated before the Tower of Babel. It was disturbing that so much was unknown before England and France got their tidy starts.

It was Father, rather than Mother, who tried to help me with these problems. Father's faith in the Old Testament was simple and sincere. Mother, sitting with her book beside the kerosene lamp, refused to be drawn into our discussions. In the end Father soothed me into drowsiness with his singing of "Lead, Kindly Light" and "One More River to Cross." When morning came, Mother turned to the kings of England with a firm hand.

Some years later I came home from town one evening to find Mother burning trash at a bonfire in the barn lot. She held up the old chart and asked, "You don't want this any more, do you?" Together we burned the chart. We unrolled it and laid it on the flames. I watched the Biblical pictures grow red, then black, and crumble. I saw the ribbons that depicted the course of nations writhe and twist and break. I

saw them draw into contact with each other where they had been meant to run in their assigned spaces all neat and self-contained. England, France, Germany, and Russia contorted themselves into tortured spirals. The yellow bands that were China and Japan coiled. India stood out for a moment, and I realized I had not studied India and wished that I might. In the end there were white ashes, nothing more. I had just consigned to flames a conception of the world that men would never hold again.

Over the Quilting Frames

When, at long last, my nine-patch quilt was finished, Mother dusted off some old quilting frames and set them up upstairs in the room next to Uncle's. Here they could stand for many weeks, and all the guests who came to the house could be invited to set a few stitches. If the process was long drawn out, it was quite obvious Mother would consider it all the better. She would be able to impress more relatives with the fact that her nine-year-old daughter had completed a quilt. This accomplishment was not too common among little girls of that day, although those of a generation earlier made their nine patches and then proceeded to more intricate patterns.

There was quite a flux of feminine visitors that summer, aunts, cousins, family connections, and friends. All set their neat stitches in my quilt quite in the manner of signing a guest register. While they sewed they talked, and the older ones grew reminiscent. They felt at home around the frames and happy, for, as they said, quilting frames had always been "up" in Aunt Nancy's house. In the earlier days the frames had stood in the Back Room close to whatever other work was going on. Guests frequently stayed for weeks, sitting most of each day at the quilt. They formed a nucleus of workers, and the daughters of the home came and went, busy with other tasks. Whenever the girls had the time, they, too, sat at the frames. Spools of thread lay upon the quilt as on a table, and a threaded needle was stuck invitingly into every un-

finished row of stitching. It was a matter of etiquette to leave a needle, freshly threaded, for the next person who would take her seat at the quilt. All this I learned from the reminiscing guests.

Almost all our visitors mentioned Aunt Rachel Fleahart who had often stayed in the house. From bits dropped by everyone I formed a pretty clear idea of this Aunt Rachel who had so impressed all who had known her. It was from Aunt Lizzie, Father's youngest sister, that I had the longest accounts. In remembering her Aunt Lizzie's black eyes had snapped in pleasant excitement. One could picture the little Lizzie, who at that time could scarcely see above the frames and who kept her chin propped upon the edge, watching Aunt Rachel with bright eyes. She remembered many of Aunt Rachel's words and the way she had looked.

Aunt Rachel's face was brown, wrinkled, and skinny. She lifted her eyes from the sewing while she talked, so her rows were none too straight. But she kept her listeners intent upon the words that flowed eagerly from her mouth. Her hands on the quilt, plying the needle jerkily, were thin like the claws of a bird.

When Aunt Rachel was seated at the frames, Grandmother Nancy relaxed a little. She was not as strict as usual about sending her daughters to attend to their household chores. She herself had grown too fat to bend over the quilting and she sat in her rocker by the window knitting. From here she maintained decorum and discouraged too much laughter. One might have heard her say occasionally, as did Victoria, "We are not amused." But when Aunt Rachel talked, Nancy dropped a little of her queenly attitude and her vast composure. She let her knitting slip from her lap, and her ball roll to the floor. Sometimes the cows lowed plaintively before she caught up her work, glanced sharply from one to another of her girls, and said, "Milking time, Linnie, Hanner! Your brothers will be coming in hungry from the fields, Becky. How many times

today have you remembered to turn the fleece on the grass, Liz?"

Rachel was not related to our family. That she was called "Aunt" by the community as a whole was somewhat remarkable. The women who bore the title, like my grandmother, Aunt Nancy, lived in dignity in their well-established homes. It was a title denoting respect. Rachel had never married and was something of a roamer. Her life was one of adventure and lacked conventionality. Yet she was highly regarded or she would never have been called "Aunt." Her morality was not questioned in the slightest degree. If it had been, she would not have received the glad welcome she was given in many homes.

Her visits to any family began with the excitement of sudden surprise. One never knew when she would ride up to a horse block, throw her saddlebags over her shoulder, and step down. The length of her stay, on the other hand, was pretty well fixed. For approximately five weeks she continued to be talkative and eager. Then, one morning she would seem to grow restless, gather up her belongings, and direct one of the boys to catch her horse. The lad who was addressed with a crisp, "Calculate you can round up my critter, Bub?" felt honored. Father had been too young ever to be singled out for this distinction, but Uncle recalled that he had brought in the horse on one occasion.

Rachel rode by day or night. Sometimes she followed the untraveled trails where the wilderness lingered and sometimes she threaded her way through canebrakes near the Ohio where the bravest men hesitated to ride alone. She knew everybody, even the old-time Indians who returned periodically to fish on the river.

For the most part it was of other people and their affairs that Rachel talked. That she gave but meager glimpses of herself possibly added to the interest she commanded. Why she came to Indiana Territory, where a brother had preceded her, was a question she left unanswered. Nor did she throw

any light on whether or not she had ever had a lover or a romance.

From household to household Rachel carried gossip. No eagerness in unfolding a newspaper was ever greater than the eagerness with which people waited for Rachel to tell the news. When an old person had died, she repeated his last words with a full sense of drama. She recounted the circumstances that led up to every baptizing and every wedding. She knew the bark that Aunt Melie Drummond used in making the dye that never faded, how Aunt Sally Coombs pickled her pork, and what Aunt Mollie Beggs added to her persimmon preserves to make them so tasty.

One experience of her own she told. At times it almost seemed as if she came for the very purpose of relating this incident, since usually it was only a matter of a day or so after the telling that she called for her horse and rode away. Until the right moment she dodged every opening and ignored every hint. Then, choosing a time when all the family was present, she began her tale. She gave the account in the same manner always, never embroidering upon it or adding to it. Thus it became as authentic as verified history. It concerned the Pigeon Roost Massacre of 1812 which occurred well back from the Ohio River in what is now Scott County, Indiana. Somehow or other Rachel, then a young woman, got wind of a movement among the Indians that foreshadowed trouble. All through the night she rode to scattered cabins and aroused the families. Although six grown people and sixteen children were killed in the Pigeon Roost Settlement itself, it was thought that because of Rachel's warnings many people in outlying places were saved. Families ran to hide in bushes along creeks, stifling the cries of their babies.

Rachel carried one baby to safety. Wee Hannibal Coombs was about three weeks old, and Rachel held him before her on the saddle, with his mother behind her, while she completed her rounds. By the time she told her tale at our quilting frames, Hannibal was an influential man, known the country

over. He had a large number of children, whose names Rachel checked off on her fingers, her eyes flashing. How many people would never have lived if she had not saved Hannibal! Was he not already a grandfather? A crow in a corn field, calling suddenly, can startle a man with the seeming boastfulness and amusement in its tones. Rachel's voice, Aunt Lizzie said, was like that.

When Settlers Were Young

The home of my great-grandfather, Thomas Carr, was not in the path of the Indians the night Aunt Rachel made her famous ride. It stood a few miles to the south. In 1806 Thomas had come across the Ohio from Kentucky to settle in the newly opened country. So while Rachel rode, smoke may have been issuing peacefully from his chimney and his hogs may have been rooting contentedly in the woods. One of the first things a settler did was to start a herd, for swine fattened without expense on the acorn mast. About that acorn mast I heard year after year, for when Father cured his hams, he never failed to express regret that no matter how carefully they were smoked with hickory wood, they would not have the same flavor they would have had if the hogs had had an abundance of acorn mast to eat. This was a flavor he had known in his childhood. It seems quite unfair that I should have heard more about Thomas Carr's hogs than about the man himself, especially as he was undoubtedly a man of prominence in his community.

As long as old records are kept, his name will be seen by those who delve into the early history of the state, but already it has become only a name with the personality of the man forgotten. One hot day in Corydon he signed that name to the first constitution of Indiana. I have always been grateful to Mother because she unselfishly allowed me to go alone with Father to visit the Constitution Elm in Corydon while the

celebrated tree was still standing. On that pilgrimage I learned to know my father in a new way and gained insight into pride of family descent.

After a tedious trip by train, with several changes, and after a ride around the old-time town with its quaint houses and its historic state house, Father and I stood together under the elm. It spread its wide branches over a large grassy plot in the middle of the town. The breeze stirred the long grass gently, and a very blue sky was over all. We looked around wondering in just what spot Thomas Carr had sat while the debates went on.

A native of the village came up and volunteered some observations. "'Twarn't like today! It was awful hot. That's why they came out of the building where they'd been meeting and sat under the elm, but it didn't seem much cooler. There was a livery stable, and the smell from the livery stable was horrible. No breeze to take it away. It was a heavy smell that just weighted a fellow down—you know how it can? And the flies—not just ordinary flies, but horse flies, too, that raised blood when they dug in. Funny how those fellows could keep their wits on that paper they were writing up. But they did, I guess. Anyway it served Indiana well for a good many years."

"This is a very different day," said Father. We lifted our faces to let the breezes caress them and looked into the softly swaying branches of the elm and the limitless blue sky. All was peaceful, established, and beautiful. "Well," said the old native, "you never saw a borning that was exactly pretty, did you?"

Father looked at me and away. A well-bred man did not make such references in the presence of a young lady.

In the late afternoon Father rented a spirited horse from the livery stable, for we were to spend the night at a hotel near Wyandotte Cave and in the morning take a trip through the cave. Our drive took us first past neat farms then into wild hills and along a scenic little river. The hotel was

rambling and crude, and outside waited a huge cave mouth that we were to enter.

The trip through the cave was an eye-opening experience for a young girl who had never dreamed there could be so many wonders underground. Father and I must have made an appreciative party for the guide voluntarily took us into a part of the cave not on the usual route at that time. Its approach had not been made easy by blasting away the rock walls or smoothing the course. We clambered along without too much difficulty, though, and gazed in awe at the eerie beauty of the newly opened chamber which the guide pridefully lighted in the way that best brought out its grandeur. It was on the return passage to the main route that a crucial moment came. At one point we had to lie prone and squirm out feet first with the rocks pressing tight on either side and on our heads. The guide went first, then Father, then I. There came a few seconds of horror when I realized that an instant of hysteria might cause me to wedge myself in. Self-control was needed to heed the unseen guide's directions to move first a knee, then an elbow, and inch my body through the jagged turns. At the end of the passage I came out to find the man executing an exultant dance. He was flourishing his torch so that all the weird cave shadows seemed to join in his celebration and the echoes took up his boastful shout. "I knew the old man could do it, but I couldn't be sure about the girl!"

My senses and my emotions were sharpened by the ordeal I had just come through. I looked at my father and saw him, lean and strong, the old man about whom there could be no uncertainty. This, coupled with the moment we had stood under the Constitution Elm paying homage to my great-grandfather, aroused pride of ancestry. It was a great thing, I began to see, to have "come from good stock," as old people said.

The facts that Father knew about his grandfather were not numerous, for the old gentleman had died in 1822, sixteen years before Father was born. In family tradition it was not

even recounted that he had served in the American Revolution. We frequently heard old people say that his brother John had died in Kentucky of old wounds he had received in the war. The fact that this brother had thus died had made his sacrifice notable, and it had not seemed, apparently, of any moment that others had fought. In any case the Daughters of the American Revolution eventually came up with proof that Thomas had organized a company back in Pennsylvania and both John and another brother, Elisha, had served in it.

The brother Elisha, who also came to Indiana by way of Kentucky where some years were spent, gave the land upon which the early cemetery of the settlers was laid out. Here, too, was built the original Silver Creek Christian Church. Relatives sometimes said the two brothers represented the two great divisions of life, Church and State. When I went to school, proudly carrying my history book which I loved, I was grateful that my ancestor had been with the State. When in the old cemetery on Decoration Days, I appreciated the fact that my great-great-uncle had given the ground on which we stood. With so many strangers gathered there I could hold myself in pleasant assurance, remembering that a member of my family had given this ground right off his own farm.

That the cemetery was very, very old was attested by the fact that every year Father took me to a certain unmarked grave and told me its significance. By shoving the grasses aside with his foot he found the remains of a mound that everyone else seemed to have forgotten. "Always remember and never forget," he said, "that the man buried here is the first one ever to be given a Christian burial in a real cemetery in Indiana." The man's name he did not know. Whether or not the statement can be verified I have no idea.

In the next generation there were two brothers of especial interest to Father and Uncle, therefore to me. One naturally was their father, Joseph. Actually they remembered little about him for he died when Father was only five years old and Uncle eight. One incident remained clear in Father's

remembrance. Father had gone with him when calling on some neighbors, probably on a business errand. While the shy little towhead was playing in the house with the children of the family, he suddenly became panic stricken and cried for his Daddy (yes, Daddy was the term used in those days). The children's mother took him to a window where he saw his Father hurriedly returning to the house, crossing a creek to do so. He was then carried home pick-a-back feeling comforted and reassured. Thus it happened that the one memory picture of a father, to be held a lifetime through, was a tender and loving one.

Uncle most frequently spoke of his father as patiently outfitting his family with shoes while working before the fire of winter evenings. Uncle showed me a collection of iron lasts of all sizes when I followed him to the loft over the woodshed. I handled the littlest ones appreciatively, trying to vision the gentle and loving grandfather that Uncle described. "I expect he could have made you some shoes off this one," said Uncle measuring a last against my foot.

The other brother was Gen. John Carr. Our immediate family felt a personal interest in him because the site of his old home had been included in the land that was now our farm. He had inherited the home place of his father, Thomas, and either he or the father had built a rather pretentious red brick house to take the place of the one-time log cabin.

John was an aggressive personality in contrast to the gentle Joseph. Some of the liveliest discussions I ever heard among the relatives concerned him. In these discussions the General had an ardent supporter in Mother who was his niece by reason of her marriage to his nephew. When she was a bride, General John, then a very old man, had come from his neighboring home to call. He had bowed over her hand in courtly manner and paid her high compliments. Loving the graces of society as Mother did, she felt instantaneous admiration for the white-haired, distinguished gentleman who bore himself so gallantly. When he left, he bowed again and, bending like

a courtier, kissed her hand. A friendship was cemented that had but a short time to exist, for the General soon died.

"But he was so clean," Mother would defend him when he was criticized. "His white hair was always so well kept—his hands, and his fingernails. And his boots shined, and his clothes well pressed. He knew what to say and how to say it."

If she gave the impression that there were others at her infare who were not so well groomed, or so well grounded in the amenities of social life, her barbs probably found their marks.

It was probably to be expected that the old politician should have met the disapproval of our immediate family. He had not stayed at home to care for his farm but had ridden away to have a hand in shaping the history of the state and the nation. When he was absent, it was Aunt Polly (née Mary Neal) who had had the work and the worry of the home place, and she grew old and brown and wrinkled before her time, or so my aunts said.

The General's goings and comings could be well marked by our family because to reach home he had to ride into his farm past our house. He was always paid one just compliment: "He was a wonderful rider. He sat on his horse as straight as an arrow."

His title of General had been received in the Indian wars and had stood him well by lending prestige during his political career. He defeated Jonathan Jennings for a seat in the United States House of Representatives when Jennings tried for a second term. He was appointed by the governor as agent for the sale of land at Indianapolis, and took a prominent part in auctioning the lots in the capital. He himself bought the finest lot, paying, it was said, over five hundred dollars for it, a huge sum for the day.

"It was an *extravagance*," said my aunts.

Perhaps it was, since the General seemed to have had no thought of moving Aunt Polly and his children to the new capital.

Nevertheless, I had my own triumph at school by telling about General John. At the proper time, when the history class was studying about Lafayette, I went to school one morning well coached and well drilled by Mother. I rose and said, "My great uncle, Gen. John Carr, was on a committee of distinguished citizens who welcomed Lafayette to the Falls Cities when he visited the United States." We all knew that the Falls Cities were Louisville, Jeffersonville, and New Albany.

It brought history very close to know that my great uncle had stood before Lafayette, and in all probability touched his hand. And with the same hand that had so gallantly pressed Mother's!

The Road to Silver Creek

At least once every year we drove to Silver Creek. The occasion was officially known as the Annual Meeting of the Cemeterial Association and was held on the last Thursday in May. I thought of it as Silver Creek's Decoration Day in contrast to that other Decoration Day on May 30 which we observed in Charlestown.

Spring was at its luscious best. We rose early to the joyous hurry of preparation. Father almost tripped over himself in his eagerness as he rushed from house to barn taking care of chores before leaving. Mother, looking a little harried, put final touches on the basket dinner she had been planning for days. Only Uncle and I could move in leisure. It was our task to cut the flowers. Never did I see flowers so clearly or have them imprinted so indelibly on my memory as on those bright mornings. When I reached into the syringa bush, dewdrops peppered my face. I saw the dewdrops lying like jewels on the white satin of the petals, while the yellow centers were like gold. I held the long sprays while Uncle cut them. They were to form the base of all our bouquets.

Uncle cut the red and pink peonies and I carried them, their heads resting against my bare arms, heavy and cool. We went to the garden for red June roses and down the hill into

the lower lot for old-fashioned yellow roses. Some years blue flags were in bloom, or the dark "velvet roses" were opening their buds along the grape arbor.

Before all the flowers were cut I was usually obliged to leave Uncle to make the bouquets alone, for I must put on my newest white dress, my black silk stockings, and patent leather slippers. Mother would be struggling into her tight and stylish black silk. Mammy Jennie would be loading the surrey with baskets of dinner. If all the food would not go into the surrey, there were other buggies to help carry it. We always had guests, people coming from afar to attend this meeting which meant for them a reunion with relatives and friends. On one occasion pretty Cousin Mollie Cole from Indianapolis presented herself at the carriage wearing a thin cotton dress, white background with sprigs of lavender flowers. Her becoming hat was lavender, too. In the city, she said, women felt they need no longer punish themselves with black silk if the weather was warm. I saw Mother looking her over and I knew that next summer Mother too would have a cotton dress.

I rode with Father on the front seat for that was the way he wanted it. Every trip to Silver Creek meant a review of the old landmarks with plentiful injunctions to "always remember and never forget." To reach the road we drove through the "back farm" following trails through the meadows and along the side of corn fields which had once been well traveled. We were in sight of the hill where the red brick home of Thomas Carr and his son General John had stood. We passed quite close to the ruins of the white brick house near which the larkspur had grown in the wheat. Father always pointed out the exact spot by the side of the creek where as a little boy on his way to school he had thought he saw a bear. He had dropped his dinner pail and run home to the comforting arms of Aunt Becky. There was no school that day for the funny little towhead in the homespun trousers, but later in the morning Aunt Becky walked with him to find the

precious dinner pail. She pointed out to him that the "bear" had been a black root sticking out from the creek bank.

Through a gate that creaked on rusty hinges we went out upon the highway. It would not be very far until we passed the site of the home of Governor Jennings. Here Indiana's first governor had lived after he retired from public life. There was only a grassy knoll to be seen now, but Father could point with his buggy whip to the exact spot. He never failed to tell how Jennings would ride home of a night on his faithful saddlehorse after spending his evenings in the tavern. The neighbors would hear him singing and hear the careful thump of the horse's hoofs. Each neighbor felt it an obligation to listen as long as these sounds were to be heard for they meant that the respected old gentleman was safe so far. By the time he had passed from the earshot of one neighbor, the next was expected to be on guard.

A little farther on we came to the site of that log school-house of which I heard so much. Here Father brought the surrey to a dead standstill. He described the interior of the room, the long desks made from logs with the crude benches behind them, the master's desk on a platform in front from which he could watch and reach for a switch if it seemed needed. There was a water bucket by the door with a long-handled dipper. It was an honor to be appointed the boy whose duty it was to keep the bucket filled. Father pointed out the limits of the playground and the place where in good weather the "scholars" gathered to sit on logs and eat their lunches. He showed me where boys had swung on grapevines far out over the creek, and told how once a boy had fallen in. Little girls foraged into the edge of the near-by woods for green moss to make carpets for their playhouses. Most often of all Father described the shouting while the children memorized. That boy who shouted the loudest was supposed to be studying the hardest. The master eyed them all keenly, and if any boy's lips were still, he descended upon him with a switch.

Farther on we came to Stony Point Church. This was

always confusing to me, for the term Stony Point and Silver Creek seemed to be used interchangeably. Actually, it seemed, the original Silver Creek congregation had worshiped in a log building beside the cemetery. Later they built Stony Point Meetinghouse, and another denomination for a time occupied the brick church that meanwhile had replaced the log one beside the cemetery.

Stony Point had two front doors, one on each side of the pulpit. Late comers were embarrassed by having to come in within full sight of all the people. I always asked why there had been two doors, and Father was never quite sure. Men had gone in through one, women through the other, yet families had sat together in the pews. Perhaps the separate entrances for the sexes discouraged "sparking" on sacred occasions. Or perhaps it was merely a carry-over in church architecture from earlier times when the men and women were more rigidly separated.

It was down the hill from Stony Point that most of Nancy's children had gone to be immersed in the creek. Here John had gone by the light of torches that winter night, and here too Father had been baptized. He could point to the very spot in a pretty place where branches bent low. We stopped in the midst of a ford in the creek to look at it. Water gurgled over the rocks and birds sang. Creation itself seemed not much farther away in time than those beginnings of things at Silver Creek and Stony Point.

At a sharp turn in the road we came unexpectedly, as it seemed to me, upon Silver Creek. A little graveyard lay in the sunlight on the gentle slope of a hill. The stones were old and gray, and the grass long. A few early arrivals for the meeting would be hitching their horses in the woods across the road. An ordeal I had come to expect was to have my hand crushed in the hard grip of welcome from Brother Harry Jackson, a veteran preacher who always had some part in the program to follow.

Old Graves and a Basket Dinner

There were few new graves at Silver Creek, and, seemingly, little fresh grief. All was old, mellow, and touched with the calmness of time. We strolled with our bouquets toward our family lots, threading our way past old stones and walking in the tall, waving grass. Friends and acquaintances greeted Father and seemed pleased to see "Lishy's little girl." I clung to his big hand and tried to hide behind him.

Our lots were far to the edge of the cemetery close to the stone wall that bordered it. There were the tombstones of Joseph and Nancy Carr, my grandparents. Near by lay Joseph's parents, Thomas Carr and Hannah Coombs, his wife. Equally near were James Drummond and his wife, Nancy, parents of my Grandmother Nancy. Grouped tightly around all these were several of their children and other relatives. The only trace of sadness came when Father showed me the grave of "Little Nancy," his sister who had died when she was eight years old. For all others the years had taken away the sting of grief. Cousins and friends who came up to greet Father and each other seemed happy. It was a day of glad reunion.

Little girls claimed me, and joining hands we ran down the paths among the graves. The ground blossomed like a garden with the bouquets that had been laid down. Wild flowers swayed among the tall grasses, and butterflies drifted in the lazy air, or came to rest on tombstones. We little girls were like butterflies ourselves, no doubt, all in our white dresses. Variations in color came in the pink or blue or yellow hair ribbons we wore at the end of our braids, and the matching sashes.

The older people gathered at length in the shade of the small brick church building. Here until noon they would hear reports about cemeterial business, varied with the singing of hymns. Some "speaker of the day" would give them a sermon. We children need not listen, but might play as we pleased in

whatever spot was level enough to give us space for games. "Drop the handkerchief" was favored for it could be played without too much noise.

Sooner or later someone of the more adventurous children was sure to suggest that we go down to "Sinking Fork." We scrambled over a stone wall (not anywhere near my family's graves, however) and came upon a dark path that led down a steep hill where the overgrowth was so dense it shut off all sunlight. The path was slippery, and we stepped gingerly, hoping to avoid falls and staining of our white dresses. The air became cooler as we descended and near the bottom of the hill it was so clammy that we shivered, partly because we were cold and partly in apprehension of what we were soon to see.

At first we had to hunt for the cave's entrance for it was surrounded by ferns and bushes growing among tall rocks. Then, gasping, we beheld the yawning, black gorge. We stood at the edge of sticky mud as silent ourselves as the white butterflies that poised with outspread wings above the slime.

At exactly the right moment some older person seemed to appear from nowhere to tell us about the little dog who once upon a time had gone down into a sinkhole miles away when chasing rabbits. He had come out at this spot, days later, a thin and woebegone creature. Then someone repeated the old tale about Indians who said they had followed the underground stream in canoes, but this was long ago before cave-ins blocked the channel. Finally someone would sing into the depths and echoes would come back. As the sounds receded into the earth they seemed to multiply as if many voices were making up a chorus. From the hilltop above came the strained voice of the preacher shouting his oration among the graves. He was talking about Hell, we supposed, since preachers usually were. We began to fancy that those uncanny voices from underground were souls in torment.

Those disquieting thoughts of underground passages which I had when I stood sometimes by our well at home were all the more frightening here. And when we came up at last to the

sunshine of the graveyard where my ancestors lay, and where lay the ancestors of my little girl friends, that analogy I was forming of underground streams and streams of life grew more clear. Those dark underground streams had been put by the Creator into the earth at the beginning of time somehow for our good. The streams of living persons had existed for the purpose of giving life to us. This today was the moment for which all creation had been intended.

At noonday the adults broke away from their solemn meeting. All began talking happily together. The men went to the carriages and came back loaded with heavy baskets. The women chose spots on the grass to spread their white tablecloths. Families grouped themselves together, and pains were taken to invite into their midst any unattached persons who had come from afar for the reunion. None of this was accomplished without much friendly talking, and appetites were sharp before the food actually began to appear on the cloths.

To unload her basket each lady donned a pretty white apron over her black dress, tying it with a big bow at the back. If we little girls had become a bit somber because of the events of the morning, we were comforted by the sight of our mothers putting out the dishes. They bent over the tablecloths, all in black with those perky, cheery little bows of white standing up behind. Some of the ladies had broad, solid, and reassuring backs, and some had lithe and hopeful ones like Mother. After grace was said by a preacher, the good things to eat were passed. There were platters of fried chicken, baked chicken, and slices of roast beef hot with pepper. There were red pickled beets, potato salad sharp with vinegar and onion, and baked beans in brown jars. Pies of all possible varieties were triumphs of cookery, and were passed proudly by the ladies. Cakes were objects of real rivalry, and I was sure Mother made the best. Hers were big and white, almost like snow, with English walnuts dotted around on the icing.

In every sense of the word basket dinners at Silver Creek

were satisfying occasions, and those days spent among the old graves did everybody good.

When, at one time, we read at school about the ancestor worship of the Japanese, some of the children seemed shocked. But I thought I understood. At our family graveyard we had not worshiped our ancestors but we had venerated them, and we had been thankful to them because they had lived and given life to us.

Picture in the Corner

A framed photograph of Mother's old home hung in our parlor. It occupied a small niche shadowed by lace curtains. In a way it was like a guest who had come in circumspectly and chosen an inconspicuous seat. Both modest and sedate it was. One might fancy that it tactfully wished not to offend although quite sure of its right to be where it was.

The house in the photograph was big and white, not different from our own in its size and air of comfortable living. It had stood in Henry County, Indiana, near the small town of Cadiz. Eight children had lived in it, of whom Mother was the oldest. I thought it would be fun to hear about them but Mother was not always willing to talk about her childhood. I often tried to bait her by reminding her of some story she had previously told me, hoping she would repeat it and then go on from there with others. I would say, for instance, "Tell me about Aunt Ida and the calf!"

That was a wonderful tale, all about how Aunt Ida, who was one of Mother's younger sisters, had slid down a straw stack one Sunday morning and landed astride a calf's back. Around and around the lot rode Ida, the calf bawling, chickens squawking. Her father was just coming down the road in a buggy, and beside him was a preacher he was bringing home from church for dinner. He forgot the decorum suitable to the company of a preacher, and leaning back in the buggy, he laughed. Mother said he laughed as only Milton Hess could laugh, putting his whole self into it. She laughed, too, in the

telling even though her eyes seemed close to tears in speaking of her father.

The story was not quite finished. When the tired calf could run no more and stopped, Ida dismounted. She kept her dignity. "I rode that calf on purpose," she said, and this, it seemed, had amused the father and the preacher still more.

I felt, quite reasonably, that there should be dozens of such stories in a family of eight children, and in my solitary childhood I hungered to hear them. Occasionally I was able to coax a new one from Mother, and gradually I came to know the characteristics and personalities of each of her little brothers and sisters. There was Minnie, with the velvety brown eyes that Mother admired, and the quiet ways; and Daisy Lenore the one blue-eyed blonde. There were the gentle and thoughtful Clinton, and Luther with the fastidious ways, who liked to play by himself. Charlie was the gay and handsome boy who could wheedle his mother and sisters out of anything he desired. Ida was the most venturesome. She it was who took over the task of killing snakes in the spring-house. Addie, petite and brown eyed, came next to Mother in age. She was written into the Bible as Adeline, but never so called. She bubbled over with enthusiasms, and her mother was always following after her, admonishing, "Addie, Addie, never giggle. Don't set the girls to giggling. *Ladies never giggle.*"

Mother and Addie had had household cares at a very early age, and far too much baby tending. The younger children were free to run from morning to night. Milton wanted it so, and Elizabeth, the mother, said, "Let them enjoy themselves while they can!"

Perhaps Elizabeth's main difficulty was that she tried to carry Virginia over into Indiana. This insight I gained not as a young child, naturally, but after years of questioning Mother. Elizabeth, and her neighbors, too, had a conception of living graciously as was done in big homes in Virginia, for most of the people in the community had originally come from that state. But in Virginia there had been many servants

to make life easy. In Indiana one had to wrestle with washing, ironing, cleaning, canning, and cooking with one's own limited strength.

Outside the home, too, Elizabeth tried to live up to her own ideals of social intercourse. Whenever she was going out, she provided herself with a wealth of comments she might make on subjects of the day. To do this she read well, and she knew what was going on in the outside world. At social gatherings she bided her time until she felt conversation had been centered too long on housework. Then, like a crusader for a better way, she made some previously planned remark upon a topic that seemed to her more worthwhile. Usually she had her newest baby with her, dressed in spotless white, and it was over his head that she courageously guided discussions.

She exhorted her girls, "Never talk about work when you go out. Work is to be done, and done as well as you are able. But when you're with other people, put it behind you. Talk about something else!"

I cannot imagine Elizabeth in a Home Economics Club. She would have done better in a literary or current events group, but there was none at the time in her neighborhood.

I was painfully disappointed when Mother showed me a faded tintype of her mother. Little girls, I think, are vitally concerned about mother-daughter relationships and it was a shock to find Mother's mother plain of face and tired looking. Her eyes were dark and sad, her hair pulled back severely. The picture was taken after the wrinkles had come into her forehead and cheeks, and the shoulders had begun to droop.

It is perhaps revealing that Elizabeth did not like the preachers whom Milton brought home to dinner on all possible occasions. Both Mother and all my aunts, her sisters, seemed to know about this decided aversion. One can surmise that some sudden outburst or explosion impressed it upon her family. Or, more likely, there was no decisive revolt, but only a long series of complaints spoken wearily and under her breath to her girls. Murmurs may have come from her lips

while she fried the chickens in a hot kitchen, or when she came, dead tired, from the parlor where she had listened to long theological discourses.

When Jennie, as she called my mother, began to teach school, Elizabeth took a great interest. Especially did she enjoy the finery the young teacher bought with her earnings. When Jennie came home for a few days' vacation, both waited impatiently until the younger children could be put to bed. Then they went to Jennie's big room, kept vacant during her absence, and closed the door. Here before the mirror the young girl tried on the dresses and hats she had purchased, and paraded up and down before the mirror. Elizabeth's eyes shone blissfully. Perhaps this glowing daughter would win all that she had failed to find.

Toward the end of her life Elizabeth relaxed a little from the disappointing struggle. With her two youngest children she went to the woods of summer afternoons, a woods just back of the house. Here, while the children played, she sat on a log and stitched on little garments. She had little to say, but she smiled patiently upon her children when they ran to her. She seems to have been a wistful, sensitive woman. What a contrast she was to Nancy Drummond Carr, and how little the two would have had to talk about if they had ever met!

Milton Hess liked everybody, and everybody liked friendly Milton. Not only did he love his children, he liked them which does not always follow. He enjoyed their activities and had no objection to their noise. He liked his friends and had many of them. Twice each year he went on a hunting trip of several days' duration. He set off glowing with enthusiasm, and came back with tales that he recounted with roaring humor. If he liked preachers more than Elizabeth wished, it was but a part of his outgoing personality. To bring them home was only fitting for a responsible deacon in the church. He esteemed eloquence whether in the pulpit or out of it. He was in favor of all good and forward-looking works, and

when Northwestern Christian University (later Butler) was founded, he gave liberally.

Of summer evenings he sat in his yard and sang. His voice seemed to soar with perfect ease to the very stars. Neighbors came out into their own yards to listen, and people passing on the highway stopped their horses and sat silent while the rich tones enveloped them. Long after the voice was stilled there were people to talk about those evening concerts. Mother's eyes were misty as she told me. She had loved her father very much. She lifted the picture of her old home from the wall and pointed out the very spot in the side yard where he had sat, and where the road had run where his hearers had paused.

That, it seemed, was the great barrier in drawing from Mother stories of her childhood—she grew sad, and could not talk freely and happily as Father and Uncle did. With a lingering and caressing finger she pointed out to me on the picture the windows of her own room upstairs. She showed me the row of maple trees along the driveway on one side and the spot on the other where the spring had been. Beautiful blue flags, she said, had grown around the spring and on down the sloping hillside. Her eyes took on that faraway look they had whenever she saw blue flowers, a look that shut me out. It was there whenever I brought her a bouquet from the garden. At those times she let the pink and red and yellow blossoms slip unnoticed to her lap, and lifted to her face the blue larkspur, or purple pansies, purple morning glories, even the tiny blue ivy or blue-eyed grass.

At such moments I tugged at her dress, trying to bring her back to me. "I like yellow flowers best," I would say, but it was no use. When the purple ironweed bloomed, making a sea of glowing color all through the Sugar Camp, she looked far off over it. Purple, blue, and all shades between had something to say to her that I could not understand.

Margaret Trippet, Gossip

There was another house about which Mother was more willing to talk than her childhood home, and her descriptions of this one made it so real no picture was needed. Obviously she had had her very best times in that house while visiting her grandmother. Grandmother Shively proclaimed that little Jennie was her favorite grandchild, ignoring any bad effect this favoritism might have on the other children. No wonder the little girl was always thrilled when her father let her out of the buggy at her grandmother's gate and she walked up the flagstones.

The quaint house was a story and a half one with a sloping roof, and set in a yard so crowded with flowers as to seem like a garden. The flagstone walk led to a tiny porch with built-in benches on either side. Here white-haired Grandfather Philip was apt to be sitting. Grandmother, in her ruffled lace cap, peeped from one or another of the small-paned windows, then bustled out to greet her little visitor.

Later, Jennie would come out again to the yard. A white-washed fence made of planks ran around it on all sides. Down in one corner of the fence, where the ground was low, grew the flowers that Jennie loved best. Butter-and-eggs they were called, all yellow and creamy white. Grandmother pointed out the moss roses, the pinks, and golden lilies. Every plant had a history all its own, for all had come in one way or another from Virginia. Some of them Grandmother had carried when she rode on horseback to Indiana, courageous but homesick for that first little home she had had with her Philip back on the "Mongehale" River. Some were from cuttings she had swapped with her new neighbors, all from Virginia, too. Sometimes seeds were sent her in answer to letters she wrote "back home" asking for them. Anyone coming "out" was apt to be carrying packets, sent with love from some garden. For little Jennie Grandmother pinched the thyme, the mint, and the lavender that she might sniff them. And all the while

Grandmother talked. Not only must she tell about the flowers and the places in Virginia where they had grown, but she must tell all about the people who had sent them. Memory led her from one tale to another until entire life stories had been pieced out. Small Jennie had not much need for reading matter when she had a grandmother who was a many-chaptered book in herself. Gossips, if they are good, are potential novelists.

Sometimes Jennie sat on the porch with Grandfather while he told her about the War of 1812. He rolled up his sleeves and showed her the tattoo marks, explaining that soldiers always wanted tattoo marks in war time. In spite of those purplish pictures that half frightened Jennie, her grandfather seemed to her very kindly. His pale lips always smiled in the gentlest of manners, and his face was clean shaven and white. He must be a very important man, Jennie thought. Did not a pension payment come every quarter from a grateful government? Grandmother always placed it, in its yellow envelope, behind the Seth Thomas clock on the mantel. Here it often remained for several weeks until Grandfather had an opportunity to send it into town. Jennie frequently saw it there and shared her grandparents veneration for the piece of magic paper.

There were two things that Grandmother loved best to do, to chat and to cook. She combined these arts to make unmatched entertainment for her visiting grandchild. She cooked over an open fire beneath the mantel where stood the clock and the pension envelope. Grandmother spoke disparagingly of new-fangled cook stoves. Her daughters and her daughters-in-law all possessed them. Grandmother, if she could help it, seldom ate a meal in their homes. Their victuals were not fit to eat, she said. Little Jennie, learning to turn the spit over the flames, was in full sympathy with grandmother's views. The most delicious fragrances came to her nose as the fowl browned slowly and evenly. Once a chicken giblet, hot and well done, dropped to the ashes, and Jennie picked it up to sample it. Grandmother reprimanded her gently for greediness, but nevertheless handed her a biscuit to eat with her

morsel. From that day on Jennie was excessively fond of chicken livers. Meanwhile, corn bread baked in a spider beside the coals and potatoes roasted in the ashes. Apples sputtered, and their juices drying on the hot hearth set up the sharpest aromas. Jennie closed her eyes to sniff them the better. Grandmother, at a table, beat eggs in a bowl or stirred up mixtures that smelled of her hoarded spices. As she worked she talked, appreciating a good listener.

It was Grandmother's own love story that Jennie liked best to hear, and Grandmother seemed never to tire of repeating it. Grandmother, then Margaret Trippet back in old Virginia, had set her cap for Philip Shively and told about it shamelessly. Margaret, daughter of Caleb Trippet of Morgantown, had been a poor girl. She lived with her parents in a humble house by the side of a road. That road wound up a hill to the mansion of the Shively family.

From every window of that mansion lights shone on nights when a party was in progress. Margaret, from her own darkened window, watched while coaches bore guests to the festivities. With her ear close to the panes she listened to the strains of fiddle music. She pictured dancing under the gorgeous chandeliers that servants described, imagined the thrill of stepping on soft carpets, and of rubbing her hand over the polished mahogany. Never did she see within the house.

As time went on the tales that were carried by servants and neighbors grew more dramatic. Two of the daughters at different times eloped. Margaret could look up at the very second-story windows where the ladders had stood while the girls climbed down to their forbidden lovers. Younger sons meanwhile became dissipated, drinking their wealth away. Slaves were being sold. Parties grew less brilliant and more infrequent.

Then came Philip, the oldest son, to the rescue. By thrift and hard work he salvaged a part of the fortune. He made trips by boat down the Monongahela, the Ohio, the Mississippi

to New Orleans with produce. Margaret understood quite well that it took an ambitious young man to do this. She peeped from her window at Philip's straight, resolute figure as he rode by on his horse. Well hidden from him, she whispered to herself, "If Philip Shively should ever ask me to marry him, I would do it!"

There came a pause here in the story. Then the little grandmother tossed her white-capped head, and added, "And one day he did!"

Jennie felt some things had been left out. But if Margaret perchance had picked flowers in her yard when Philip was expected to ride by, she did not tell.

Philip and Margaret came to Indiana when their first child, Elizabeth, who became Jennie's mother, was two years old. (According to family records she was born in 1825.) Philip had divided the remnants of the family estate among his brothers and sisters. The few slaves that remained he apportioned out among the heirs. His own he set free before he came to Indiana.

He had one story above all others to tell his granddaughter. He told it not brightly as was the fashion of Margaret. This story he related solemnly as if duty impelled him. Once, he said, he had watched beside the river bank while two little boys, his playmates and the sons of the family cook, had been sold into slavery "down the river." The boys had reached out pleading arms to their Mammy, who, helpless, stood on the bank as the boat pulled away and the width of water between them grew larger. They could not understand why their mother could not save them, and neither could Philip. He had often been comforted by the touch of her kind hands when hurt and solaced with her little cakes. The boys screamed, the mother bowed her head into her apron, and Philip ran into the woods. Here he flung himself beside a log and sobbed. Then he knelt and lifted his face toward the sky. Earnestly he made a vow. All his life through he would do all within his power to fight slavery.

On the stand table in the little house where Grandfather and Grandmother Shively lived was a neat pile of periodicals. In the evening Grandfather sometimes read aloud from a serial story that had come out in them. Grandmother's chatty voice was stilled while she listened, and Jennie listened too. The story was entitled "Uncle Tom's Cabin, or Life among the Lowly." Grandfather spoke then about the abolitionists and what they hoped to accomplish. He himself was dedicated to the cause. The Seth Thomas clock ticked solemnly and the fire on the hearth burned low. Jennie, looking into both gentle faces, felt it was sweet as church to sit with her grandparents.

Matilda, Chary of Smiles

Jennie found after a time that her Grandmother Shively who knew the life stories of many people could tell her about her other grandmother. Now, Jennie was afraid of Grandmother Hess. When she and her mother went to call on this grandmother, they waited a long time in a darkened parlor. The furniture was very big. Mirrors awed a child who was not accustomed to seeing whole rooms, from floor to ceiling, reflected in them. Lace curtains were stiff and solidlike. One wished to push at them to see if the comfortable outdoors was still there. But Jennie's mother cautioned her to sit very still and touch nothing.

At last a rustle of silk was heard on the stairs, and Grandmother came through the doorway. A proper little girl was expected to approach and extend a hand, a gesture that required courage. Grandmother's skirts stood out stiffly; her sleeves were long, almost covering her cold hands. There was a brooch at her collar and Jennie fixed her eyes upon it, afraid to look higher, at least with more than a glance. Grandmother's hair was parted severely, her eyes dark. There were people who remarked of her that she was never known to smile.

Jennie, who as she grew up saw her grandmother rather infrequently at family gatherings, believed the statement. She never really knew her and she herself never saw her without

that cold, forbidding look on her extremely handsome features. So when people said, "Matilda Hess is never seen to smile," Jennie took the saying quite literally.

Grandmother Margaret, the happy-hearted gossip, pieced out the facts of Matilda's story for Jennie. Matilda had been born a Scott in Virginia, and her first husband had been Alexander Scott, her cousin. He had died leaving no children, and Matilda had later married Thomas Hess, said to have lived across the state border in Pennsylvania. They had come to make their home in Indiana where other members of the Scott family settled. Thomas was a red-headed, sandy-complexioned, practical man who made money. Matilda dutifully bore him many children. All the daughters were dark-haired beauties and the sons were, each in his own way, jovial, gay, or brilliant. They carried rather fanciful names at a time when tired-out Bible names were most in use. Wilford, Raleigh, Luther, and Milton, they were called. It was Wilford and Raleigh who were gay, Milton jovial, Luther brilliant. Grandmother Margaret, incurably romantic, and Jennie, the growing girl, were inclined to pin a few dreams and fancies on Matilda. Perhaps (they thought) Matilda bottled up in her heart the tragedy of her early marriage with her cousin, and, having to live out her days with the practical, hard-working Tom Hess, expressed a little yearning for poetry and romance when she named her babies. Grandmother Shively did not like her at all, but she was willing to grant her that.

Grandmother Margaret knew about the Scott family back in Virginia, although they had not lived as close to her as the Shivelys. Old Capt. David Scott had fought in the Revolution with Colonel Gibson who led the colonists against the Indians on the western borders. David Scott had good reason to fear the Indians, and Margaret knew the dramatic story well. Two of his little daughters, Phoebe and Fanny, had set off one day to carry dinner to their brothers working in a clearing. They were riding an old white horse, one behind the other, and Grandmother Margaret was able to give the

horse's name, which was Topsy. Their mother, at work in her kitchen, heard shrieks but thought the girls were jostling each other on Topsy's broad back. She listened until the sounds stopped, then went on with her work. Later the horse came back, riderless, and neighbors joined in a search for the children. Signs of Indians were found along the creek. If there were other details, gory ones, Margaret spared her little listener the hearing of them. It was sad enough to know that little Phoebe and Fanny never came home.

Captain David's son James served as a musician in the company his father organized at the beginning of the war. At the end of two years he was mustered out on the grounds of his extreme youth. Margaret, who had never set eyes on Judith Scott, was glad she got her boy back.

James lived to become a colonel in the War of 1812. Captain David received a grant of land from the new government of the United States for his services throughout the Revolution. Margaret and Jennie let their imaginations run wild on the matter of this land. Several thousands of acres it had been, Margaret thought ten thousand. It was in a number of tracts, and Margaret believed Captain David had built a stone house on one of them. The house was on the bank of a river or large creek with woods all around it.

There was a story that George Washington had visited David Scott. Margaret and Jennie assumed it was in this handsome stone house. They had a happy time imagining George Washington's coach rolling along on the crude roads, majestically, toward it. Jennie was grown before she learned that it was in Washington's early surveyor days, actually, that he stayed overnight several times in the Scott home. At that time the Scotts were living in a two-story log house which was occupied for many years by their descendants. Initials carved near the fireplace by Bushrod Washington, companion of George, were tangible evidence of the visits. Bushrod had cut into the logs his own initials and those of a young girl who was staying with the Scotts. Though he did not marry the

girl, the family friendship was strong, and there were Bushrod Scotts in generations to follow.

Margaret, though relishing the dramatic stories of the past, was not willing to go overly far in extolling the present importance of the Scott family. She was annoyed by an expression that was often used by members of the family in Indiana, and, as they said, in Virginia. It came sometimes from the lips of the stylish, well-dressed daughters of Matilda. Jennie heard it from those gay young uncles, Wilford and Raleigh. When these happy bachelors came to visit, they tweaked their niece's hair, held her on their laps, and sang songs to her. Quite naturally she adored them. Half laughing, half teasing, but with pride, they told her, "We Scotts are a proud race!" The saying persisted. I myself heard it not long ago in my own kitchen from a distant cousin.

Margaret, however, when it was repeated to her, bristled. Standing in her modest home among the flowers where she lived contentedly with her beloved Philip, she jerked up her little chin. Of Jennie she asked, rhetorically since the child could not be expected to answer, "Proud of what?"

Jennie Hess, of Untested I.Q.

Some time in the summer of 1851 a small girl stood on an outdoor stage, or platform, and "said a piece." She wore a new calico dress, a white pinafore, and beruffled pantalettes. Her bright brown hair was brought back from her forehead and held by a round comb; curls lay on her neck. Her head was high, her eyes sparkled, and her voice rang clear and strong. This I know because she told me about it, not once but many times. She was little Jennie Hess, aged five, who grew up to become my mother.

The burst of hand clapping at the end of the piece enchanted but did not surprise her. Her unfrightened voice had reached out through the grove for all to hear. She had been self-assured in her gestures as well as her words. At appropriate times in the course of several stanzas she motioned to-

ward the trunk of a huge oak tree around which the platform had been built. Near the end she stepped over and placed her hand upon the trunk, looking up into the branches. The poem had been about a hollow tree. Mother, recalling every word, recited it for me, her eyes aglow. It began: "I stood beneath a hollow tree, all hollow, hollow, hollow." In every stanza there had echoed those resounding syllables, "hollow, hollow, hollow." The end was cynical, "And I found all life to be hollow, hollow, hollow." A pessimistic selection to have been delivered by a stout-hearted baby!

Jovial Milton Hess was openly proud of his child, beaming as he received the congratulations of his friends. Timid Elizabeth found a chance to hug the little girl close to her bosom and whisper praise. A spokesman of the committee in charge of the program presented her with a small beaded purse as a prize, and she kept this carefully all through her life.

It was probably the last time the small Jennie was so painstakingly dressed in beautifully stitched and carefully ironed pantalettes. Elizabeth would seldom again have the leisure for so tedious a task, since other babies would come rapidly. If one was to attempt all those snow-white and well-starched ruffles, buoyance and freedom from fatigue were needed.

Nevertheless, a precedent had been established by the early triumph. Jennie was expected to be smart, and Jennie was. She walked often to the village of Cadiz and carried home library books which she memorized. When she was sixteen, she taught her first school. To do so successfully she mastered the matter of discipline over several boys who were taller than she.

It was in the springtime before she became a teacher that romance came to her. On her sixteenth birthday, as a gift to her, her lover planted a row of maples along one side of her home. They grew up to shade the windows of her room, and she could look into their leafy boughs. It is no wonder, perhaps, that when years later she and I stood before the picture of the house where she had lived, her fingers caressed the

trees. Though I never knew exactly how, those blue flags by the spring undoubtedly played a part in the love story. It may be her lover courted her down by the spring while the flags were blooming. In any case it came to pass that blue flags, and after the flags all blue flowers, became a sentimental part of her memory of first love. A beautiful, exalted love it must have been, for Caleb gave her a little Bible artistically inscribed, "To Jennie Hess, from a friend." I often came upon the small leather-bound Bible in a drawer with a few yellowed papers. But these papers Mother asked me not to handle.

Caleb Cooper died of a lung trouble contracted when he served as a soldier in the Civil War, and Jennie remained true to him for many years. Not until she was thirty-two did she consent to marry anyone else. Her younger sisters, as I was told by one of them, were awed by the grief she showed when, facing marriage, she burned her love letters. They crept down the stairs and secretly watched her in the parlor. She reread each letter, tears streaming down her face, and tenderly placed it on the flames in the small stove, watching while it crumbled. On the very night before her wedding she walked to the cemetery which was across the road and down the hill from her home. Here was the grave of her sweetheart which she had often visited, and here on the last visit she wrung her hands and wept bitterly.

Between first love and affianced husband there had been beaux. Jennie, though refusing to marry, had not been at all averse to "accepting attentions." Perhaps she enjoyed them all the more because her heart was not involved. She wore the prettiest clothes her salary as a teacher could buy. She held her bonnie head high and she sparkled with wit. The Hess sisters were famed the country round for their beauty, but each of the younger ones has said to me, "Jennie was the one! The rest of us just followed in her shadow."

There was one occasion when Jennie, "smart" as she was, failed to recognize the importance of an event. The sprightly, black-haired Ida had been receiving a few calls from a steady

and admirable young man, named John. John asked that on a certain Sunday he be permitted to bring along his brother Jimmie for a surrey ride, and that Ida's sister accompany them. Now, the brother was younger than Jennie. It was not becoming in an established belle to stoop to younger boys. Then, too, he was a wandering sign painter who wasted his time writing verse. Jennie consented to go only if Ida would tactfully manage to drive on back roads. On that day Jennie wished to hide from her friends: in later years she still kept the incident hidden, but for shame of herself. She felt she should have been bright enough to perceive the genius of her escort, James Whitcomb Riley.

Up the ladder of successful teaching Jennie tripped. At length she was in the Indianapolis school system which, under the superintendency of the well-known A. C. Shortridge, had become one of the best in the United States. Superintendent Shortridge was an imposing man, tall, immaculately dressed in clear blue with white linen. His bushy hair was snowy white, his eyes keen and very blue. His teachers feared him. When he was in a building, the first teacher to learn of his visit wrote a note and dispatched a boy to carry it to all the others. The note invariably read, "The lion is loose."

Miss Hess, teacher of the second grade, thrilled to the challenge. Her eyes sparkled, her shoulders were drawn up straight. She called on her best pupils with questions she knew each could answer. If she did not often win from Superintendent Shortridge the compliments she aspired to obtain, she understood that when he whirled to leave, after but a brief stay in her room, he was satisfied.

Jennie was happy as a teacher. She liked the feeling of accomplishment, the stimulating people she met. It was a day when a woman was not expected to stay long unmarried unless she had an acceptable reason for so doing. Though it was not exactly a disgrace to be an old maid, a tragic love affair was desirable to explain spinsterhood. Without questioning the

sincerity of Jennie's grief for her Civil War soldier, one must perceive she was well equipped for a career.

Wedding and Infare

Meanwhile, down in Southern Indiana, a young farmer was growing prosperous. He, too, had had a romance but the young girl he once hoped to marry had died of dreaded typhoid fever. Years afterward, I, though not then comprehending, felt the gentle influence of this love. I sat throughout my childhood in a little church where a colored glass window threw its soft light over the pew accorded my father, my mother, and their child. The memorial window held the representation of a scroll, graceful amid the rich colors of glass, and reading, "Martha VanHook." I knew that the parents of the young girl had given it to the chapel, and I knew that long ago Father had sung with her in the church choir.

A preacher brother-in-law of my father, who was known to me as "Uncle R.L.," had played an important role in bringing Jennie Hess and Elisha Carr together. His picture hung over the mantel in the Front Room, in a conspicuous spot not far from Grandmother Nancy's own portrait. His whiskers stood out all over his face and hung down over his shirt front. He had a straight, large nose and his dark eyes were of the sort that followed one into every corner of the room. He appeared at our house in person at one time and attempted too soon to embrace me. After his visit I tried very hard not to lift my eyes above the mantel. I was relieved one house cleaning time when Mother took the picture down and placed it in Uncle's room. Since I had previously discovered that she did this with all old things when the time was ripe for getting rid of them, my relief seemed justified. I had not liked the homage my parents seemed to pay this man, and without his presence I felt in some unexplainable way our family had gained dignity.

Something dimly understood, but humorous, about my parents' meeting disturbed me. The husbands of my aunts,

Mother's sisters, liked to tell the story and when they did so they laughed uproariously. Father smiled, but I could see he felt it was not funny. It appeared that Uncle R.L., who preached at various points in the central part of the state, though living at the time in the south of it, had met a particularly attractive young woman who had not married. Uncle R.L. believed that his farmer brother-in-law, growing more well-to-do by the year, had much to offer. Good taste forbade that he drag the young man off to meet the young lady too openly. An excuse was readily available, for in the home community of the lady a certain stock raiser had fine cattle for sale. Elisha needed a blooded calf for his herd, and the plot developed. Those husbands of my mother's sisters came into the story later, for after Jennie and Elisha were married other weddings followed. Ida captured a young doctor of our Charlestown and went to Kansas to live. A brilliant school-teacher of our community succumbed to the beauty of Minnie's velvety brown eyes, and they made their home in Cincinnati. Daisy (who had renamed herself Helen) found her fate while visiting Ida and the doctor in Kansas. Each of my uncles jesting all too boisterously, though happily, said, "Look at all the trouble that pesky bull calf started!"

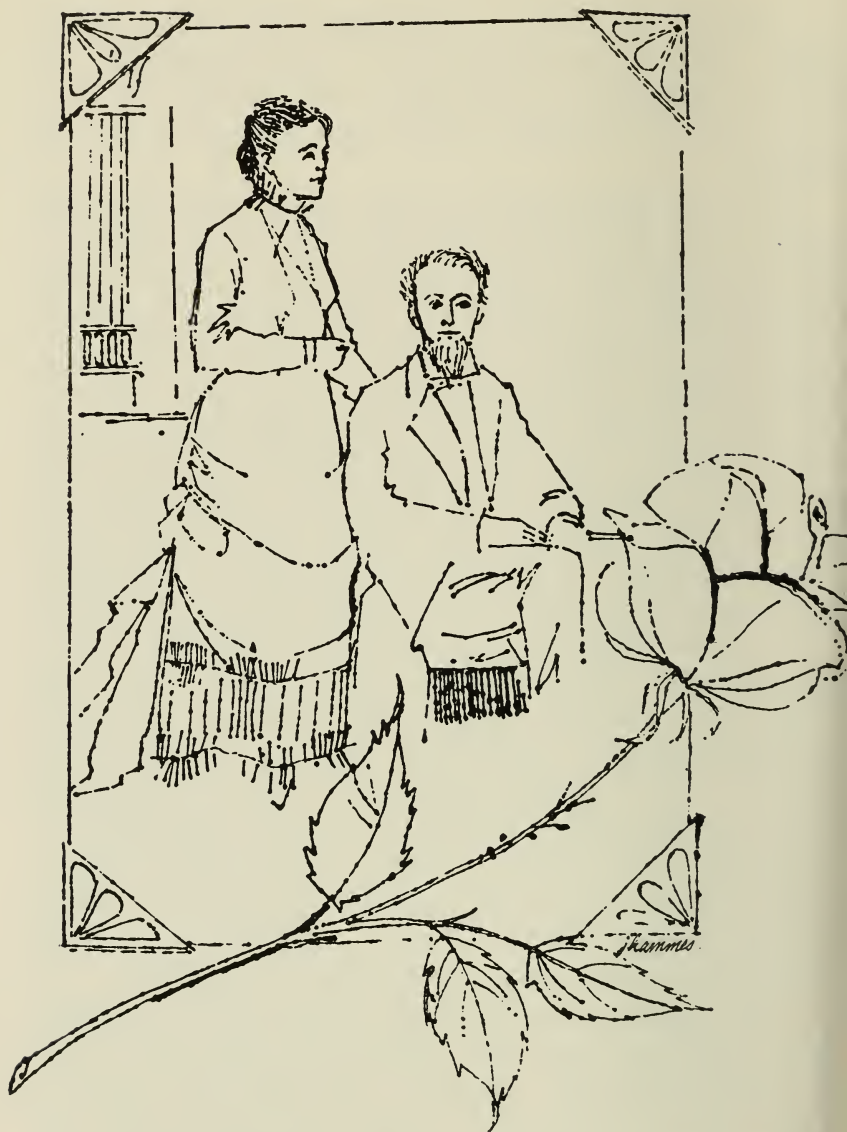
Much better it was to let Mother tell me the story of her wedding. I heard the tale first in its entirety on a lovely day in May. It may well have been the twenty-second of May which was the anniversary date. I was helping carry down from upstairs the contents of presses and drawers to be sunned in the back yard. Mother came upon a little packet tied in tissue paper, and she summoned me to sit beside her on the stairs while she opened it. Beautiful outdoor light came in upon us from the opened door of the hall, but it did not wholly banish the magic radiance of the blue glass panels which I loved. Scraps of silk fell from the package, and Mother caught them up to hold first in the clear light, then in the shadows of blue glass.

"Pretty?" she asked. "Champagne color, my wedding dress. These pieces are all I have left. Once I got frugal and had the dress dyed so I could wear it out. Never," and here she looked at me severely, "never allow yourself to get too *practical*."

She went down then to the parlor and returned with the picture of her and Father taken shortly after their wedding. I had often seen it but now she held the scraps of ruffle against it showing me how the dress was made with all its intricacies of elaborate drapings. In the picture Mother wore the diamond earrings and the bar pin which I knew well. Her hair was waved on either side of her forehead and caught in a low coil at the back. One of her hands rested on the back of the chair where Father sat, for in those days, it seemed, men sat, women stood. Mother's chin, however, was raised in that firm but pleasant way she had when she gave out my lessons. I was often in awe of her, and I wondered if Father had been.

It was a thought which vanished as I looked at Father. His expression radiated confidence, and the smile I knew was in his eyes. A strange Father he was, though, for though his chin was bearded as I had always seen it, his upper lip was shaven. This was a style already out of fashion among men, and it was associated in my mind with quaint old pictures of solemn preachers in books of sermons. Even with this handicap he impressed me as a very handsome man, and his wedding suit hung in rich folds of fine cloth. Anyone could see that both he and Mother had enjoyed posing for the picture.

With rushing words Mother told me about the marriage. The wedding had been small because only recently her father and mother had died. Uncle R.L. had performed the ceremony, and I pictured him standing importantly, hand on breast, whiskers and all. Ida played the organ in the parlor. I knew somehow the wedding could not have been possible had not the valiant Ida, she who killed the snakes and rode the calf's back, seen it through. Afterwards Ida drove the couple to Mechanicsburg where they took a train for Cincin-



nati. All must have occurred early in the morning for after Cincinnati there was a boat ride down the Ohio to Louisville, Kentucky. Previously I had heard snatches of the happiness of that lovely May 22 on a luxurious river steamboat. The scenery was beautiful, the captain attentive, passengers admir-

ing, the bridegroom proud. Apparently no serious attempt was made to conceal the status of the newly weds.

They stayed that night at the Galt House in Louisville. I often had had the Galt House pointed out to me when we drove through Louisville. I was told with considerable emphasis that it was a noted hotel. Famous people whose names were in my history book had been guests there. I was never inside but I looked up at its imposing walls and was afraid. To stay in the grim Galt House seemed to me one of the penalties of growing up. It was a part of maturity, like having one's teeth pulled to make way for false ones, or getting one's ears pierced for earrings. I hastily put the thought from me.

The next morning the couple drove home for the infare. This I could picture happily for it was a coming back to familiar scenes. My aunts, father's sisters, drove from their homes to help prepare the dinner. The long table was set in what was now our sitting room, but which had been used for a dining room. My aunts, younger than when I knew them but in the well-known black silk, fluttered over mountains of food. Tall cakes stood ready to be served with homemade ice cream later in the afternoon when the townspeople came to call. When that hour arrived, buggies and carriages rolled along the lane and climbed the hill. Horses were hitched on the green sward outside the yard fence. People walked up the brick walk that Aunt Becky had freshly reddened for the occasion. They passed through the stately columns of the portico and entered the hall. Through the parlor door they could see bride and groom waiting to receive the guests.

The editor of the paper was among the callers, busy storing up adjectives grandiloquent enough to be used in an article he published a day or so later. Social arbiter of the community, he showered the new wife with compliments both verbal and written. As I heard the story from Mother's lips, the infare seemed the glorious beginning of something that was not to end.

But for Mother, in spite of triumphs of the day, a great change had come. Not only was she no longer Miss Hess but

in her new home she was no longer Jennie. It had been previously agreed between her and Father that her name was to be altered. He disliked the pronunciation given *Jennie* by the older people of the community—"Jinnie" it was called. Fortunately for him, Mother had been christened Mary Jane, Jennie being the diminutive of Jane. The solution was simple, and Father introduced his wife as Mary. Immediately on the very day of the infare mature men and women of her own age, her new nieces and nephews, greeted her as "Aunt Mary." It must have had a sobering influence upon her.

From that day on her personality changed back and forth with her name. When her own people came visiting and failed, though they tried, to call her *Mary*, the old Jennie returned, laughing, confident, like the belle of Henry County. A happy-hearted "Aunt Jennie" planned games for my cousins, children of her sisters. I felt the lightheartedness of her spirit and the grace of her manners. Life lost all its seriousness. On the other hand, "Aunt Mary," overseeing painstaking meals for relatives and discussing practical matters with them, was frequently stiff and ill at ease.

But it was no real matter. Father needed neither name. For him she was "Wife," spoken with affection.

The new Mrs. Carr began married life in a spirit of hopefulness. At the time Father's enthusiasm, other than farming, was not the raising of race horses, which he took up later, but a cheese factory. Farmers from all around the country brought him milk. In a clean, well-lighted building that stood below the barn even to my day, the milk was processed into round cheese cakes which he marketed once a week in New Albany. Mother rode with him often in a spring wagon along the old corduroy road. Many of the logs that had formed the road in an earlier day still remained, and seemed to Mother a quaint and historic remnant of the past. In New Albany Mother shopped, quite happily, for with her love of finery she could never have been content far away from stores. On the jolting journeys on the corduroy the two made plans.

They would not stay close to the farm, but every winter they would go South, to Florida and New Orleans. This pleasant program they did indeed carry out for a few years until my advent brought an interruption.

Streams of Life

Two sharply differing streams of life united when Father and Mother married. The channels through which these streams had flowed into Indiana had been clearly marked. Mother's people came from Virginia into the central part of the state, the Shivelys in about 1828 and the Scotts in 1831. Father's people had come about a quarter of a century earlier to new settlements just north of the Ohio River, crossing above the falls where Louisville and New Albany now are. Their route from Pennsylvania had led them through Kentucky where many of their relatives and friends built their cabins and remained. Though the northern group knew hardships, riding horseback as they did over mountainous country to their new home, they experienced few of the real obstacles that the southern group overcame.

It was natural, then, that the people to the north should retain a degree of lightheartedness and a gentle way of viewing life. The southern group, having struggled for mere existence, revered toil for toil's sake. The northerners were quick to establish community libraries and better schools, while the people to the south applied themselves to work, feeling the virtue in it. These attitudes persisted into later generations. Thus it was that my mother's people, meeting at our well, drank lightly of the water, tossed away the drops remaining in the cup, then strolled off to lie in hammocks, read magazines, and chat gaily. Men of my father's family lingered, leaning on the fence, their shoulders stooped, their hard brown hands grasping the pickets. They talked first of the vegetables, then of field crops, the harvest, the weather. Hearing them speak of rain, whether received or needed, was to smell the first drops falling on scorched earth. I was keenly conscious of

both attitudes. The ways of Father's people were those I found all around me, and I was at home with them. Visitors from Mother's side brought stimulation.

Furthermore, political and national issues had left their effects on the families, and on the individuals I knew best. Mother herself sang in an all-too-earnest voice, "We are coming, Father Abraham." Always on Decoration Day, May 30, she took me to Charlestown, dressed beautifully and carrying bouquets. I was to march in the parade and place flowers on the soldiers' graves. A little frightened, my hand in that of some other little girl, I was expected to keep step with the music and walk the long distance from the schoolhouse yard to the cemetery. At the head of the line of children marched old soldiers of the Civil War in their faded blue uniforms. Mother had looked at them with misty eyes, and when the thin music of fife and drum had begun to play and the line of children to move, she had seemed far removed from me. Relief from an unsettling emotion came when, the parade finished, I sat between Father and Mother in the "opera house." Here we listened to an oration, patriotic but differing little from a sermon. I looked at Mother sitting straight, with unnaturally bright eyes, and moved over very close to Father. He would put out his arm for me to snuggle inside it, and there would come peace, the beautiful unquestioning peace of church.

Once, in our sitting-room school, Mother turned the chart of world history up to its very end. Because the chart had been published soon after the Civil War a heroic picture of Lincoln stood at the close. I think neither Mother nor I took into consideration that it was merely the date of publication that caused Lincoln to seem as if the climax of all history had been reached in him. Mother's fingers caressed his picture and her eyes were brilliant, her tones solemn, as she said, "The Union is safe! There'll never be another war!"

Father's silence about Lincoln remained unnoticed by me until one morning when I was packing my school satchel. Uncle, dressed to drive me to school, stood at one end of the

drum stove, Father at the other. Quite out of the blue, I heard my father say, "Stephen A. Douglas was the greatest man who ever lived!" Uncle agreed eagerly. Words raced back and forth between them. It was as if a lid had been lifted and thoughts long confined had rushed out. "If Stephen A. Douglas had been elected president there would never have been a war. The South would have freed its own slaves." My well-loved history book, with its pretty red binding, was in my hands and I looked at it as astounded as if someone had questioned the very Bible.

With maturity I recognized the drama of these differences. My maternal ancestors, slaveowners, had freed their slaves and joined the abolitionist movement. My paternal ancestors, honest to the core, who had never owned a human being, nor would have if they could, had refused to bear arms against the South. I trust this speaks well for both.

Farther back in preceding generations there were other beliefs, other faiths, and other forms of nostalgia. When Grandfather Milton Hess sang in his yard of summer evenings, it was the Scottish songs that he rendered most fervently. In a fine frenzy of patriotism he made the fields resound with "Scots wha hae wi' Wallace bled." Already it was forgotten what ancestors on the Scott side had fought for Scotland, and when, but the emotion persisted.

When Grandmother Margaret cuddled Jennie beside her in the fat featherbed under the rafters of her story-and-a-half house, it was of England they talked. Somewhere in the Virginia ancestry there had been a lady, whose name Grandmother had forgotten, who grieved her life through for the hawthorn hedges of England. Grandmother, who herself had never seen a hawthorn hedge but thought she loved them, pictured their beauty to Jennie until both slept with visions of long vistas of blossoming shrubs.

By daylight Grandmother showed Jennie a prized coverlet made by an old weaver, known the country round as "The Englishman." When Jennie was eight years old, Margaret

presented her with the coverlet. Its chief value seemed to be that it had been woven by a man who had come directly from England. So imbued did Mother, in her turn, become with reverence for all things English that she caused me to learn the kings better than many children know the United States presidents.

Facts are soon forgotten but the emotions they have brought into being linger. Yet after a few more generations they too are lost. Here one can make the analogy to streams of water. One stream, flowing into another, carries sediment from the soil through which it has come. The sediment gives color to the water, yellow, or red, or brown. Anyone looking can see or recall the course of the stream. Then after a time the currents mingle and the distinguishing hues vanish.

The stream of my father's people was a strong and quiet one. For the most part the tributaries that fed it differed but little from each other. The first Thomas Carr landed in Maryland with his brother and sister, orphans. The parents had died on the voyage and been buried at sea. The children were cared for by friends, and when they married it was to their own kind, Scotch-Irish, resourceful, sturdy, practical.

The Thomas Carr of a later generation, he who came to Indiana, married Hannah Coombs of Pennsylvania. Of her it was remembered that her girlhood home had been named "The Beehive," apparently with pride. Thus it had glorified the ideals of hard work, thrift, persistent "busyness." One may reasonably assume that there was little difference of personality or background between her and Thomas, and therefore little difference of aims. She must have been a worthy mate for a substantial pioneer citizen, building a community in territorial Indiana, and doing his part in building a state while serving in its legislature.

If the Welsh strain in Nancy Drummond's ancestry brought into the stream a different sediment and a different coloring, they were quickly lost. They must, however, have been different, and that fact makes speculation about them the

more interesting. Nancy, it would seem, belittled love of beauty, inherent in the Welsh, and favored the practical ways of her pioneer neighbors and the family into which she married.

As I listened throughout my childhood to stories about my people, they seemed not unlike the accounts of the Pilgrims in Massachusetts or the Dutch in New Amsterdam, which Mother and I read together at history lesson time. Both led gently toward the present that I knew. Nor were they greatly different from the Bible stories of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, pioneers in world history. All were of beginnings that had existed to make the present possible. In my stable home the culmination of all life had been reached. Serene and lovely, the home gave no grounds for doubt or insecurity. The streams of life, formed by tributaries back in the past, had flowed but for the purpose of bringing life to me. This I believed.

Once Again, the Well

Anyone on seeing Uncle Will in the parlor would have known he came from Mother's side of the family. He chose the parlor for his reading because it was the coolest room in the house, directly over the cellar. He opened all the windows, letting the breezes stir the long lace curtains. Into the middle of the floor he drew the big platform rocker. Tipped well back in it, he placed his feet upon the cherished brown upholstery of another chair, a member of the carved-walnut suite. On still another chair stood a pitcher of fresh buttermilk from Mammy's churn. Thus ensconced, he calmly wielded a huge palm leaf fan, turned the leaves of his book, and from time to time sipped from his glass. It was a startling sight, one which would have stirred to the depths my black-silk aunts.

Uncle Will was the father of a cousin who spent several weeks of every vacation with us. He himself came less frequently and his visits were brief. My cousin and I made the most of him, for he was able to answer questions very satisfactorily. He had more information than mother, school-

teacher though she was to the tips of her toes. Uncle Will could talk on Greek mythology in a way that seemed thrillingly wicked to me, brought up as I was on the Old Testament. He knew about trilobites, coral formations, and glacier boulders. We carried to him rocks picked up on the hillsides, asking, "What is it?" We kept the screen door shrieking on its hinges as we rushed in and out.

Uncle Will would take a fossil in his hands and turn it over caressingly. Then he would speak of events that had happened millions of years ago as familiarly as if he had been watching from afar all the time. He told us about the ice cap and the glaciers that had rolled crushingly over our now gentle hill slopes. People were still drinking, he informed us, from a reservoir of water the glaciers had left like a great sea under ground. But things were a little different, he said, in our part of the country. Rock formations along the Ohio kept the water from being spread out beneath us. Instead it was flowing in streams through crevices. Uncle Will said some day those streams would go dry. That might have been an alarming thought, but was saved from being so because Uncle Will casually mentioned also that after millions of years the sun would grow cold. There seemed to be no immediacy about either matter.

I lived to see the day the well did go dry. Long after I was woman grown, while we still owned the farm but did not live on it, the well was condemned. The surface water that flowed into it in wet seasons was not fit for drinking. Only cattle and horses were watered here, taking their drinks from an iron kettle. To increase the amount of water ungainly pipes carried rain water from the roof of the house. The once wonderful well had become merely a sort of cistern.

The whitewashed box had rotted away and been replaced by an ugly iron pump. All that was left of the locust tree was a decaying stump: the lilacs and japonicas were gone. Across the garden fence the earth was white from lack of mulch, and such plants as grew there were thin stemmed and weak. The

wooden grape arbor, once so invitingly cool and so beautiful with flowers along its sides, had been torn down. In its stead somebody had stretched wires along a structure of poles and plowed among the vines. Discouraged from lack of kindly care, they clung feebly to the wires and produced few leaves and small grapes.

The house bore little resemblance to its former self. The Grecian porticoes had rotted away and had been replaced by a gingerbread veranda, wholly unsuited to the architecture. Now the gingerbread veranda itself was warped and rotting. In reroofing the house the severe classic lines had been sacrificed and the Doric capitals torn away leaving unsightly scars in the weatherboarding. The green shutters had been taken down exposing curtainless windows that stared painfully into the sunshine. Inside there was no longer magic for the blue glass was broken and gone.

When the yard fence needed rebuilding, it was set in a foot or so on every side. This seemingly slight change detracted from the once hospitable air of the place, making it appear the farm was niggardly of ground. The evergreens had died, and the once flowering shrubs, twisted and gnarled, were like derelicts that had abandoned all hope. The once gracious country home had become a commonplace farmhouse.

Farther away, the maple grove was thinned almost to non-existence, and the hills where the trees had stood were bleak. The lane was weed grown, the creek almost dry. The pretty cave entrance by the bridge was only an ugly hole in the ground. The rock fence had fallen down, the fruit trees were dead. Out at the road there was no longer a Big Gate with proud gold letters. The highway had been straightened in order that automobiles might flash by on their way to somewhere else. On leaving town one could no longer see the familiar curves of a leisurely winding road and fancy, for a blissful moment, that one was going home.

I stood one day at the iron pump where the picturesque well box once had been. There I had come face to face with a

heifer who had planted her feet stubbornly behind the iron kettle from which she proposed to drink. She stolidly asserted her right to be there and gazed at me with large, brown, vacant eyes. Unwittingly I gazed back, and that I should not have done. To gaze long into the eyes of a cow is a thing no one should attempt. Evolution, stark and cruel, is to be met there. All the blind forces of life, struggling from beginnings too vast to be comprehended, are held somehow in the unthinking eyes of a beast. Hypnotic power is there keeping one rigid and motionless, no matter how frightened one may become. Standing before the heifer I relinquished the philosophy of my childhood, or, at least, recognized that it was gone. Intellectually I had let go of it bit by bit in every college course, in every book I had ever read. Emotionally I had never before allowed it to be stripped from me, nor stood so helpless and naked of soul.

These were the facts I faced: no streams either underground or of ancestral life had flowed for ME, as I had once so egotistically and artlessly thought. A fixed abiding place in the world's course had not been reached. In our home we were not on the pinnacle of existence, the spot for which everything that had gone before had been designed. Far different from that, I now saw that change was the great fact of life. Change was the monster that ruled inexorably, and from change there was no escape.

The Leave-Taking

Years before the day I met the heifer the stream of life had made a turn and flowed on. There came a September morning the year I was thirteen. Our luggage was packed, for it was good-by for a time. Father had hired a farm manager to look after his stock and rented his fields to neighbors. The manager and his wife were to live in the back of the house. For a few weeks in summer they would go to the red cottage where Mammy Jennie had lived. We would all

come home in summer, and in winter Father would make frequent visits, staying in the front rooms.

The reason for the change was that I was to attend college preparatory school. Father was looking forward to new leisure. Mother's eyes had been radiant with happiness all summer. About Uncle I had worried, for I could not conceive leaving without him. For weeks he had hoed his garden and gathered his eggs without committing himself. At the end he had said he would join us, but a little later.

We climbed into the surrey, Mother and I on the back seat. Father took the left hand seat in front, thus indicating that his new manager was to have the driver's place. This was odd, for I had seldom seen Father hand the reins to anyone else. I looked hard at the back of his shoulders, erect in his new blue serge suit. He was making eager motions with his hands as he gave final instructions about the care of the stock, and his words tumbled over each other. The man leaned respectfully toward him, listening carefully.

At the foot of the hill I looked down at the bird cage I carried in my lap. The tiny bunch of golden feathers, hopping from perch to perch, was the only one of my pets that I had been able to bring with me. I had said a sad good-by to my little dog and the horses, run to take a final look at all my play places. It was easier I now found to keep my eyes on the bird than to lift them to the beloved maple trees of the Sugar Camp. We were making a turn just beyond the bridge and not following the lane to the big gate. This course would take us to the town of Memphis where the interurban was to be boarded. The maples, misty in the early morning, stood to our right, silent and, I thought, sad.

I was part child and part adolescent that day. I regretted my dolls that I had spent weeks packing into the closet in the big room adjoining Uncle's, making sure their beds and cradles were comfortable. I would find them next summer just as I had left them, but I knew I should never play with them in quite the same way again. Nevertheless, I was looking for-

ward with a new curiosity about the future. Not long before I had made a discovery that excited me. Alone in the spare room at the top of the winding stairs I had been toying with objects tucked away in the top drawer of the dresser. I had found a yellow scarf of heavy silk, gypsy bright, and knotted it around my head, and then looked into the oval mirror with its frame of walnut roses. Never before had I seen my reflection without comparing myself unhappily to the sparkling and assured beauty of my city cousins. I had pushed shut the drawer and made my way down the stairs in the mystic blue light. My feet were bare, and the cool Brussels carpet on the steps gave spring to my movements. The polished railing slipped under my fingertips as if I were half floating. I felt I was sailing into the future, a time I had always blocked from my thoughts. The future, quite suddenly, had offered strange and beautiful promises.

I had something of this heart-stopping joy while we drove away from home in the early morning of September. There was no magic of blue light as in our hallway, but there was sparkling sunlight on dew, and the calls of the birds in the maples. Whatever was to happen to me would be good.

At a little rise, or small hill, in the roadway, Mother said, "Let's stop a minute!" Almost automatically Father directed the driver to pause. Without looking around he continued his conversation with the man.

Mother leaned over to me to gaze at the house we were leaving. Never before had our old home appeared more beautiful. There was majesty in the way it stood outlined against the morning sky, serene on its hilltop among its sheltering cedars. It appeared to be accepting our farewells in stately dignity, as if it were in some manner superior to us. We might go, small creatures that we were, but it would remain. I felt not only the sadness of homesickness, but a guilty sense of wrong doing.

I searched Mother's face, hoping she would put reassurance into words. Her eyes were brilliant, but not entirely from

happiness. Even as I looked at her, I knew I should never be told what she was feeling. Her chin was lifted and her lips drawn thin in that way she had when she was withholding herself from me. I had seen her look much like this when we took walks along the lane of evenings. She had a fashion of turning to gaze back over the way we had come. I had always been exasperated to have her go deep within her own thoughts. No tugging at her hand could bring her back until she was ready.

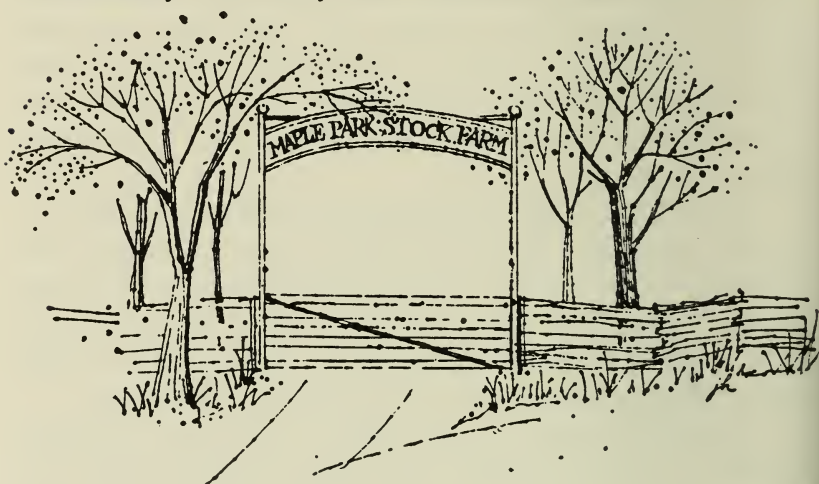
This morning I did not try to speak to her. I well knew she was glad to be leaving this house, for it had showed in her actions all summer long. It had never been quite her home, but had remained the house of Grandmother Nancy who had built it and laid down the laws that governed it. But now that we were on our way, gladness did not seem to be the strongest emotion showing in her face.

I sensed currents of feeling that I could not comprehend. I could understand, however, that this was a dramatic moment. We remained at a standstill on the hillock. We were poised between that which had been and that which was to come, quite as if the pendulum of the old Seth Thomas clock had stopped for an instant before completing its swing.

Father, finishing some instructions to his man, turned to Mother. "Well," he asked, "beginning to feel salty yet?" It was not the first time Father had called Mother Lot's wife. He himself seldom looked back, actually or figuratively.

The driver lifted his lines and the horses moved on. Time was to prove, as a matter of fact, that Mother and I were assured of pleasant ways ahead. Father, enthusiastic and buoyant of temperament, was making the plans. Mother would have a lovely home and many new friends. She would enjoy social contacts as only those people can who have lived long in remote and solitary places. She was to relive her youth in her daughter, buying pretty clothes for us both. Later there was to be a bungalow in a small orange grove in Florida, where for both her and Father old age would be tranquil and blessed.

The surrey swung down the side of the little hill. In the house we left behind nothing at that time had been changed. The pieces of furniture were all standing in their accustomed places. Above the hearth in the Front Room Grandmother's picture hung. Whenever Father came for one of his brief visits he would build a fire and Nancy would be warmed. Meanwhile, in her solitude, she would look out over the wainscoted room she loved. Her domain was in order, albeit cold, with all her belongings arranged as she liked them. Mother, who had tried to make innovations, had rolled away in the surrey. In a way both women had won.



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